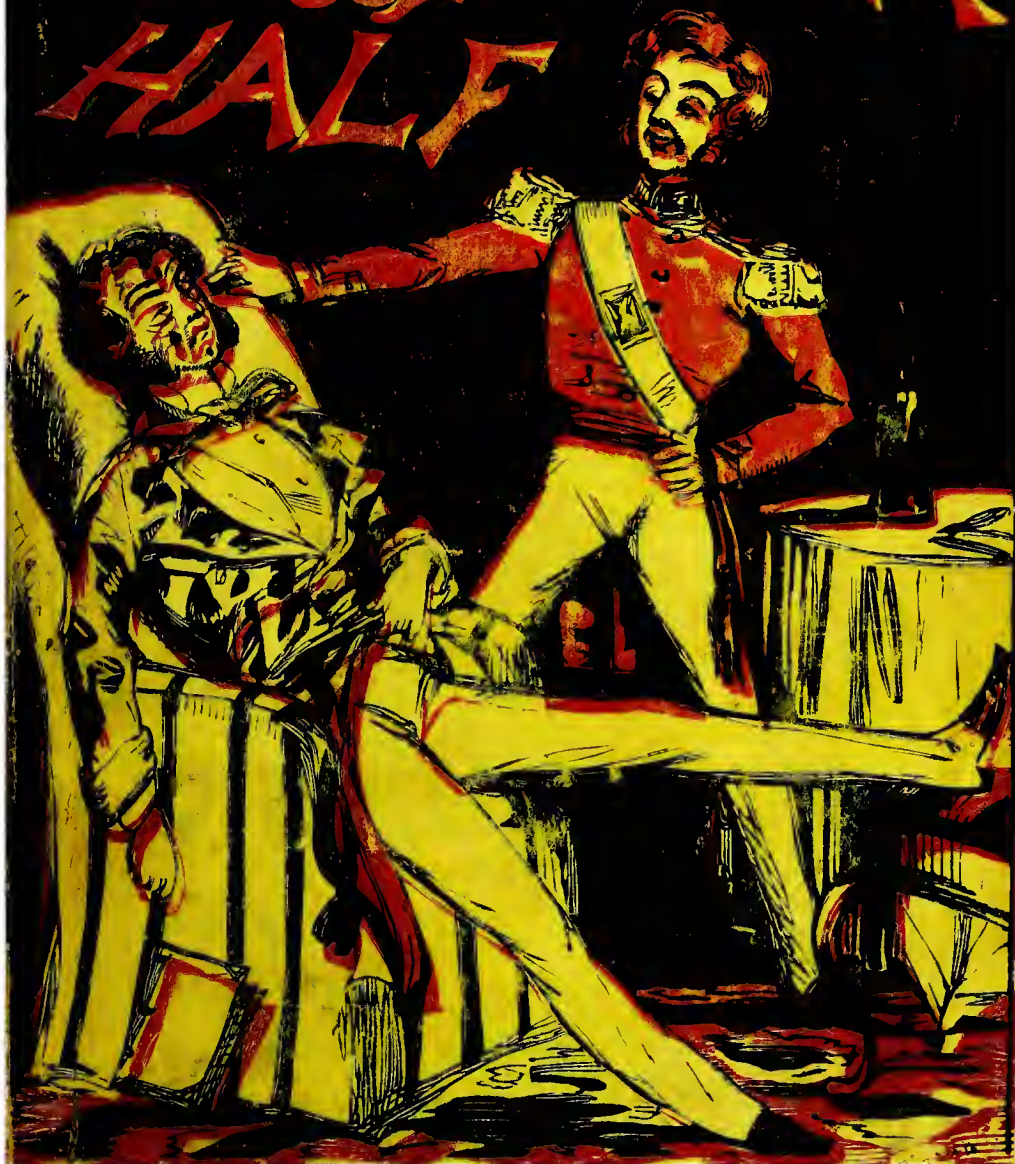
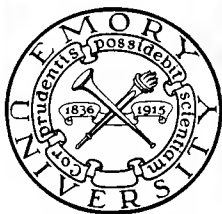


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THE HARROWAYS.



CHAPTER I.

SAMUEL FREEPORT was a younger son. His father made no provision for him beyond getting him a commission in one of his late Majesty's Regiments of Foot; for he was quite satisfied that Sam's propensities would induce him to squander every shilling. The old man, therefore, on leaving the world, recommended him to the care of his brothers, who were three in number.

Sam had been very lucky in promotion. At the age of twenty-four he had his company. He had given it out that he was to come in for an enormous fortune at his father's decease, and he was not a little disgusted when the melancholy truth was broken unto him—namely, that he was dependent on his elder brethren, with whom he had no sort of sympathy.

The only consolation that Freeport found in these circumstances was afforded by his vanity, which prompted him to think he might marry a dowager duchess, or some single heiress equally wealthy. Our hero was wrong in his opinion—that he was the handsomest man in the world. At the same time, he was what may be termed a very good looking fellow. He stood about five feet ten, had a fine open countenance, laughing blue eyes, and a small mouth, about which was ever playing a very winning smile. He was a favourite with most people, but a "pet" in his corps; for all the members, from the colonel to the junior ensign, loved him for his good temper, and excessively kind heart. Sam used frequently to draw largely on his imagination, but no one ever heard him say an ill-natured word against any man breathing. The sole object of his invention was the amusement of those who listened to his stories. In proportion to his warmth of heart he had a coolness of disposition, which in other men would have amounted to impudence; but in Sam Freeport it was wit.

At the time when he heard of his father's death, the corps was ordered to march from Huddersfield to York, and in the month of December entered that ancient city, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, the band playing vigorously

"Oh! they marched through the town,
With their banners so gay."

Sam gave a boy sixpence to show him the way to the White Horse. He called for the landlord, and inquired whether the Earl of Dunburley was staying there. He was answered in the negative. Sam expressed his surprise, as he said his lordship told him he would certainly be there on the 18th. The landlord suggested that something might have interfered with his lordship's intentions. Sam said it was very likely, and then inquired if anything was going on in York.

"Why no, sir, nothing particular; and until the assize ball, I take it, we shall not have much gaiety. The Newshams give an evening party to-night, to which I believe everybody is invited."

"Who is Newsham?"

"Mr. Newsham, sir, is our leading attorney, and transacts the business of all the first men in the county."

"I wonder if he could give me any intelligence of my friend, Lord Dunburley?"

"It is not at all improbable, sir."

"Where does he live? Can I get a chaise here?"

"Certainly, sir."

A chaise was ordered, and Sam Freeport was conveyed to the house of Mr. Newsham, "the leading attorney."

After apologizing for calling at such an hour, Sam Freeport said he wished to consult Mr. Newsham on a matter of business; that he had some twenty thousand pounds in the funds, which he wished to draw out, and invest at a more profitable rate of interest—for instance, upon mortgage of landed property in Yorkshire.

Mr. Newsham remarked that the matter could be very easily effected, and Sam gave him the necessary instructions for a power of attorney. He then inquired after his friend the Earl of Dunburley, and affected a mysterious astonishment when informed that his lordship had gone upon the continent.

"Which is the first inn in York, Mr. Newsham?"

"The White Horse!"

"Thank you," returned Sam, looking at his watch. "I fear I am too late for mess, and must——"

"I am about to dine, and if you will give me the pleasure of your company, I shall be delighted!"

Sam said, "You are very kind; really—I—shall have much pleasure."

Mr. Newsham and Sam dined *lôte-à-lôte*. Mrs. Newsham and her four daughters had dined at half-past two, and had been hard at work since that hour in making preparations for the forthcoming gaiety. By eight o'clock Sam had disposed of more than one bottle of very superior Madeira, which had been presented to his host by a client of whom he was not a little proud.

It was a peculiarity of Freeport that he discarded all sorts of formality and stiffness on very short acquaintance, and when his host broke to him that they had a party at which he hoped Sam would be present, Sam replied, "My dear fellow, Newsham, it will delight me. I like your company and conversation, and I'd go to the other end of the world to serve you."

This, coming from a man who had twenty thousand pounds in the funds, and who was for investing it on mortgage, touched Newsham's heart, and made him respond in these words—"Captain Freeport, I not,

only respect you as the friend of Lord Dunburley, but I regard you with esteem for your inherent good qualities."

"Give me your hand," said Sam. (Newsham gave it.) "Never mind my good qualities and Dunburley; but if you love me, call me Captain Freeport no longer, but simply *Sam*."

A note, or rather a memorandum, came in to Mr. N. from his wife. It ran thus:—"It is now past nine, and there are you sitting, telling those stupid stories of yours, and never thinking that people are coming, and that room will be wanted for the coffee. When *are* we to expect you to leave that room?"

Newsham wrote in pencil,—“Don't be angry, love; I'll come presently. Captain Freeport, of the —— Foot (a man of large fortune), is with me on business.”

Sam saw there was a domestic screw loose, and proposed going home to dress. Newsham said, “Your quarters are at some distance. You will do very well as you are.” But Sam was too vain to yield to this, and left his host for the purpose of attiring himself in his uniform.

Sam had a faithful servant, named Blew, who always awaited his master's coming, no matter at what hour. As soon as Sam's voice was heard, the candles were lighted, and everything in readiness. Orders were given to get out the articles of dress which Sam required; and while Blew was engaged in obeying the mandate, Sam pored over his MS. book of complimentary quotations, culled from the British poets of all times. He didn't know a soul of the party to which he was going, and therefore looked for something as general as possible. The following struck him as “*very good*,” and he applied himself to commit it to memory:—

“Oh, were those eyes in heav'n
They'd through the starry region shine so bright
That birds would sing, and think it was the morn.”

Sam had repeated these verses at least eighteen times; but as he pulled on his gloves, he thought it would be right to test his accuracy, and therefore called on Blew to take the book and *hear* him.

“Oh were those eyes in heaven, the birds would chirp and swear it's morning.”

“Not exactly, sir,” said Blew; “you've missed the middle line.”

“What middle line?”

“They'd through the starry region shine so bright.”

“What's the use of the starry region? They're much better without it.”

“So *I* should say, sir; but it is here in the book.”

“Oh, never mind that. What is it? ‘O were ~~the~~ birds in heaven, they'd swear those eyes’—What is it?”

Blew repeated—

“Oh, were those eyes in heaven,
The birds would sing, and think it was the morn.”

“I've left out the middle line, sir.”

“Let us have another look at the book,” said Sam. “There, now I have it. Tell Mr. Harroway I have dined out, and gone to a ball.”

The air had had some effect upon Freeport, and he felt as though some

of Mr. Newsham's Madeira had got into the heels of his boots: not that he was intoxicated, or thereto approaching. His capacity for wine was enormous, and he had tested it too frequently to admit of his yielding to the strongest of grape juice. With his mental faculties quite clear, and his body perfectly erect, he experienced merely a slight to-and-fro movement from the knees downwards.

Mr. Newsham stood near the door of the dancing-room to receive his warm-hearted acquaintance. Freeport was now introduced to the lady of the house and her daughters—four very good looking girls, who were all dressed exactly alike.

There was a rich and comfortable look about the abode of the leading attorney, and Sam suddenly made up his mind to be on very good terms with the family, as long as the corps was quartered in York.

The girls were not handsome, nor were they what is termed "highly accomplished." But they were famed for feats of horsemanship, and their manners were somewhat masculine, and strikingly in contrast with their graceful and very feminine appearance. Their conversation, too, was peculiar. It partook so much of out-door matters.

It was Anne Newsham's birth-day. Anne was the youngest but one. Freeport solicited her to dance with him. She rose abruptly from the ottoman, and took his arm.

"How do you like York?" said Anne, beginning the conversation.

"I have hardly had an opportunity of judging yet: but the little I have seen has made a very favourable impression," replied Sam, sweetly.

"That's all gammon and spinach," observed his partner, with an honest laugh.

"I assure you it is a fact," urged Sam, not a little taken aback.

"Do you intend to join the hunt, Captain Freeport?"

"Oh, certainly."

"That's right, and get all your friends to do the like. We shall have a noble meeting this year, I hope."

"Do you take much interest in these matters?"

"Did not the governor tell you that we girls have been in at the death of every fox that has been killed near this for the last four years?"

"No!"

"Then that's a wonder; for he tells every one."

It was impossible to know, and not to like the Misses Newsham, albeit they were such very bold girls and said such very odd things. Sam was charmed with Anne, and when the dance was over he lingered by her chair, and talked about "the chase."

Before Sam left her he took an opportunity of getting rid of his quotation,

"Oh were those eyes in heaven,
The birds would sing, and think it was the morn."

"More fools they," said Anne, looking him full in the face, and squinting hideously. "The birds of the air are not green enough for that, Captain Freeport."

Sam laughed loudly, and when Anne looked straight again, he felt a decided affection for her.

"I'm afraid you will find York a very dull place, Captain Freeport," observed the hostess.

"Were it ever so dull," said Sam, "your contribution to the society would enliven it."

"The girls are very lively, certainly," conceded Mrs. Newsham. "But the place itself—I suspect you will not like the place. It is so fearfully quiet—too much so for young people."

"I shall like it all the better for that," replied Sam, readily. "I am very fond of sociality, but I cannot say I enjoy much gaiety and racket."

"Well," said Mrs. Newsham, "that's just what I feel. A few friends and a merry laugh: but the racket of continual parties is to me past all endurance."

"You are quite right," quoth Freeport. "If you know people, know 'em well; and if you can't know 'em well, why don't know 'em at all. That's my principle."

"And so it is mine," said Mrs. Newsham.

"And if that principle were acted up to," added Sam, "there would no longer be any truth in the saying, that 'you may have a church full of acquaintances, but the pulpit will hold all your friends.'"

Mrs. Newsham was approached by a very important personage, of about forty-five.

Freeport took the opportunity of getting away, and making up to Newsham, who had just heard, so he said, of a splendid opportunity of investing capital. By the time this little matter was talked over, it was twelve o'clock, and supper was announced to be on table.

Before Freeport left the house, Mrs. Newsham asked Sam to take luncheon with them on the following day. The reader will readily imagine he did not refuse.

CHAPTER II.

"WHERE were you last night, Sam?" asked Mr. Harroway.

"At an evening party," was the reply. "Managed it beautifully."

"But *where* were you?"

"That's another matter. By and bye I'll introduce you, if you behave yourself. Very nice family indeed. Hospitable father,—sensible mother,—and the jolliest girls I ever met in the whole course of my life; and no brother. By the bye, Harroway, as I told one of the girls I had the best stud in the kingdom, I wish you would let me act as owner of one or two of your best animals—the chesnut and the grey for instance."

"Very well," said Harroway; "but don't forget they are mine—don't in an enthusiastic moment make a present of them, as you did by Jemmy Linton's family teapot."

"Never fear!" said Sam. "I'll buy a brace of good beasts as soon as my credit is well-established in this place; but in the meantime I must show myself off on yours; and if it would not make any great difference to you, I should like to own your Stanhope."

"Very well, Sam; anything you like."

"I'll introduce you the day after to-morrow. I can't do so before then, because I am establishing a little affair, and you might be in the way. Do you see, Harroway? Fine girl—noble spirit—and money doubtless."

Harroway laughed, and Sam donned a very becoming "Mufty," in spite of a positive order that no officer should appear in public, except in uniform. The colonel was a very tight hand; but he had grown tired of talking to Freeport about regimental matters, and in consequence, Sam enjoyed a much envied impunity. It was generally said of Freeport that he was the best fellow, but the worst officer in the British army.

With a complacent smile, Sam Freeport mounted the valuable grey of his obliging chum, Lieut. Harroway, who was worth some six thousand a year. Harroway's groom followed Sam on the chesnut, to the door of Mr. Newsham's house, where our hero dismounted. The girls, from the drawing-room windows, admired the beautiful creatures in the street, as they were led up and down by the groom.

Mr. Newsham had risen very early and prepared the power of attorney; but Sam said he had received letters from London, which would delay the execution till somebody or other's formal consent was obtained to his selling out his property in the stocks. The girls seemed glad to see Sam, and their mother greeted him very warmly. At the suggestion of Anne, the horses were sent round to the stable.

The time passed rapidly away, and it was now three o'clock. The girls were going to ride that evening, and Sam offered to escort them. His offer was accepted, and at four the cavalcade moved out of the old city. Anne Newsham, at Sam's special request, rode the grey, and he took the chesnut. As soon as they were outside the walls, Anne Newsham called out to her eldest sister, "Jessie, lead the way across country."

"Come along!" cried Jessie, and putting her horse at a ditch, she cleared it, and galloped across a long field, towards a five-barred gate in the corner. Jessie was followed by Jane and Maria. Anne wished to ride in company with Freeport, and "waited" on him. Sam was an extremely bad horseman in a field, and he funk'd the ditch; but he was ashamed to show his fear, and dashed at the leap like a man. The chesnut took it, but Sam came on the animal's shoulder. Anne "lifted" the grey over, and patted him on the neck as soon as the leap was cleared.

"Here's a pretty business," said Sam to himself as they approached the five-barred gate, and saw the other girls topping it. Anne again reined in to wait on Freeport. Sam curbed up the chesnut, and wouldn't let him take the gate; at the same time he called him "an obstinate rascal" for not doing so.

"He will follow me," cried Anne, and she put the grey over the gate with the most perfect ease imaginable.

"If I break my neck, here goes," muttered Sam. He gave the eager steed his head, and was in the next field instant. Sam was very nearly off: but he explained this by saying that "the brute bucked it."

"I love a Buck Jumper," cried Anne, her cheeks glowing, and her eyes sparkling with excitement, as they galloped side by side—towards a hedge, which the other girls were making for.

"I'm blowed if I like any jumper at all," thought Sam, "and if I get safe out of this, you'll not catch me coming cross-country again."

The hedge was a teaser, and Anne wished to show Sam her style of riding. "Yolicks!" she cried, as the grey leapt with his light burden,



ANNE NEWSHAM SHOWS SAM HOW TO TAKE A GATE.

grim death; but he was thrown, and with difficulty clung to the reins, and prevented the chesnut leaving him to walk. Anne Newsham roared with laughter, while she observed, "you are not much hurt."

"Yes I am though," responded Sam. "He stamped upon me." (This was not true, but Sam had had enough of jumping, and didn't feel inclined for any more.)

"Let us take to the road," suggested Sam.

"Very well," said Anne. "Get up—I'll show you the way."

Freeport got up, and they jogged on together. There was something very captivating about Anne Newsham's voice; and she was a great talker.

"I envy you this dear horse," said Anne, as she leapt him out of the field she had just leapt him into.

"Do you?" said Sam; "then he is yours."

"No, no, Captain Freeport. I would not deprive you of him."

"But you shall," urged Sam—"you shall give me yours in exchange."

"My horse is not so valuable a creature as this, but a very good one, and I love him dearly. No, no, Captain Freeport—keep your grey. If I should ask you to lend him to me for the next stag hunt I know you won't refuse."

"Refuse!" exclaimed Sam. "If you asked me to cut the throats of the pair of 'em I'd do it this moment."

"Are you sincere?" asked Anne.

"Sincere!" replied Sam. "Just pull up, and I'll get off and go down on my knees and swear it."

The other girls had left Sam and Anne a long way behind, and reached home half an hour before them. Sam made out that he was very much bruised, and set up all sorts of wry faces when he got into the house. He contrived, however, to eat a very hearty dinner, and to enjoy the walnuts which Anne cracked for him when they all drew their chairs round the fire, and Newsham filled the glasses with the choice Madeira.

Sam became warmed with the wine, he felt determined to effect an exchange by giving Anne the grey for her own riding horse. She declined hearing of such a thing at first, but inasmuch as he became importunate, she observed, "Well, Captain Freeport, as you insist on a swap, of course I can't hold out any longer. I'll send you Mazeppa to-morrow morning."

"Mazeppa! Why, that's the name of the grey," said Sam.

"How very odd!" ejaculated Anne and all her sisters.

Now, the horse's name was not Mazeppa, but Gaffer Grey; and under that name he had won several steeple chases; but it pleased Sam to have a coincidence at the sacrifice of fact.

It was nearly eleven o'clock before Sam Freeport returned to his quarters. Harroway was not there, and Sam smoked a solitary cheroot, and talked to Anne Newsham, in his imagination, preparatory to turning in for the night.

"I say, Sam—here's a very nice bit of horseflesh come here for you," said Harroway, next morning, shaking by the shoulder the sleeping Sam.

"Where did you pick him up?"

"Bit of what?" said Sam, rubbing his eyes with his fore-finger knuckles.

"Horseflesh."

"Oh, it's some mistake; it is not for me. What a fellow you are, to come and cruelly disturb a man in the middle of a delightful dream."

"How could I tell what you were dreaming about? By the bye, is it true that you put a lassie upon the grey yesterday, and that the grey bolted with her?"

This brought to Sam's recollection that the "bit of horseflesh" was intended for him. He looked Harroway full in the face, and then roared with laughter at his own thoughts.

"Is it a very nice animal that has come for me?" inquired Sam.

"Yes," replied Harroway; "a very nice animal indeed."

"What's his colour?"

"Bay, with black points."

"What's his height? Is he equal to my weight?"

"Yes. But you don't mean to say you have been such a fool as to buy a horse without seeing him—especially in Yorkshire?"

"I bought him on description."

"Then you deserve to be taken in."

"What's the animal worth?"

"From 85*l.* to 100*l.* What did you give for him?"

"More than that. By Jove! George, I am afraid we have been done."

"Don't say '*we*,' Sam, for you can't call that horse a regimental purchase, you know."

"No," laughed Sam. "It's a regular individual stick, George. It can't be helped. There's no use in crying over spilt milk, is there?"

"No!—but what did you pay for him?"

"You say he is not worth more than 100*l.*"

"Not a stiver more."

"Then, by Jove, George, I am ashamed to tell you."

"Why?"

"Because you'll repeat it, and I'll get laughed at. I'll impart it in confidence, if you like,—on your giving me your word and honour as a gentleman you will never mention the transaction to a soul breathing."

"On my word and honour, Sam, I never will."

"Then, my dear George, for that little bit of horseflesh I swapped your grey to a girl—"

"The devil you did!" exclaimed Harroway, fearfully put out, for the horse had several engagements, and his sporting owner was very proud of him—"Then I'll be hanged, Sam, if I allow him to go."

"Oh; you must, George. Consider, my dear sub, your captain's honour is at stake. Would you have me ruined for the sake of a horse?"

"I declare, Freeport," said Harroway, emphatically, "that you are, without exception, the greatest fool in the kingdom, where women are concerned."

"It's all very true, George. But what can a man do—when a nice girl admires your horse, and pats it on the neck, and calls it a sweet creature."

"Why, let her admire it."

"But suppose you happen to know, she admires you, as well as the horse?"

"Never mind—stick to your property."

"But I can't, George."

"Then I wish to heaven you'd stick to other people's."

Freeport roared with laughter, and Harroway, in supreme disgust, walked up and down the room, muttering, "It serves me right!"

"What a flinty-hearted fellow you are, to be sure!" said Sam. "I don't think you know what a pleasing sensibility means! Come now, say candidly, had you ever a single tender emotion?"

The question made Harroway laugh, notwithstanding he was very much provoked.

"Look here!" said Sam, stretching forth his hand. "Put down the value of the grey against me in your pocket-book—value him at what you like. I shall marry an heiress one of these days, and then I'll pay you the amount, and you shall have interest at 8 per cent. out of my pay. You have got lots of money, and are always beating your brains to know how to invest it. You ought to look on this as a deuced lucky transaction. You never got such a high rate of interest in your life."

"Can't you get off the swap?"

"Wouldn't ask such a thing for the world—I'd rather pay you a thousand pounds for the horse."

"I hope the chesnut is safe," said Harroway, in a doubting tone.

"Quite. Let me see—yes—I stuck to the chesnut—that is to say—"

"What?"

"I didn't dispose of him, or swap him."

"Then you don't take him out any more—recollect that."

"No—I'll never trust myself again, George—I shall tell the girls I have sold you the chesnut because he bucked the hedge and spilt me."

"What do you mean, Sam?"

"Why the fact of the matter is this," began Sam—and he detailed all that took place on the day previous. Harroway, on hearing of his fall, was convulsed with laughter, and by the time Sam had finished, his sub's chagrin at losing Gaffer Grey was almost extinct. "Now then," ejaculated Sam; "I'll get up, have breakfast—and about half after twelve we will go together and visit the girls, George."

CHAPTER III.

GEORGE HARROWAY, was duly presented to Mrs. Newsham and her daughters, by Sam Freeport. The exchange of horses that had taken place between Anne and Sam was soon brought in as a topic of conversation.

"Don't you think Captain Freeport was rather green, Mr. Harroway?" asked Anne.

"That's a charming little animal of yours which my friend now possesses," replied Harroway.

"I would not part with him for all the horses in the county," said Sam; "I never rode such an easy graceful creature in the whole course of my existence."

"Why, you have never been upon his back yet," observed Harroway. There was a general laugh against Freeport, in which he could not help joining.

"You are fond of the chase, I understand?" said Harroway to Anne.

"Yes, we are all fond of it," she replied.

"I am rejoiced to hear that; as we shall meet in the field. Captain Freeport has been good enough to sell me his chesnut, and he is almost as good as your grey."

"We shall see in a day or two," said Anne. "The hounds meet on Thursday. Captain Freeport, I hope to see you on Mazeppa."

"Most assuredly," said Sam. "Who'd be absent?"

* * * * *

"Are they not jolly girls, George?" inquired Freeport, when they got into the street.

"Very," was the laconic reply. "Anne is a remarkably fine girl."

"And she's gone, sir!"

"How do you mean, gone?"

"Why, she's head over ears in love with me, sir. The governor is a wealthy man, I fancy; but then there are four of 'em, and people have a dislike to divide their property during lifetime. I am afraid I can't afford to marry her, George: I wish I could. No, sir, I must have an heiress. Nothing short of an heiress will do for a man in my circumstances."

At this moment a brass plate bearing the words, "BLINK, SURGEON," in large letters, met Freeport's eye. "What a queer name?" he exclaimed. "I wonder what sort of a fellow Blink is, George? Blink! Blink! I have a curiosity to see Blink. I'll bet you a crown I will describe Blink nearer than you do."

"Done!" cried Harroway.

"How are we to decide it?" asked Harroway.

"That's easily done," said Sam. "I can be sick, and go to consult him. Come along!"

Freeport told Harroway to rap at the door, and keep from laughing.

Blink was a good looking, well made young man, who had just commenced practice. He was politeness itself: and he listened to Sam's symptoms with a very patient ear.

"When did the pain first come on?" said Blink.

"About a week ago," said the patient, in a feeble voice. "Our doctor pronounced it to be liver; but I am certain it is no such thing."

"Decidedly not liver," said Blink—"Have you any difficulty of breathing?"

"Very considerable." (Sam gasped.)

"How is the appetite?"

"None at all. Can't touch a thing. I sicken at the sight of food."

"Have you any depression of spirits?"

"Yes—especially as the evening approaches." (Sam looked wretchedly sorrowful.)

Blink promised to send Sam a draught that would do him good; and to call upon him next day. Sam then informed George Harroway, in a broken tone of voice—loud enough for Blink to hear him—that he had forgotten his purse, and George must give Blink a guinea.

Harroway felt compelled to pay Blink, and having done so, he led Sam Freeport out of the room, at a snail's pace.

"That's a drawn bet, George," said Sam, as soon as they got a short distance from Blink's door.

"And I suppose I may say the same of my one pound one? You are the most expensive companion that ever lived. Sam."

"I never knew a fellow who cared so much about money. What's the use of your wealth to you, if you don't enjoy it?"

"Now then, you have saddled yourself with a doctor—I'm not going to pay him any more."

"How 'saddled?' Can't I say his one dose cured me, and I feel as well as ever I did in my life?"

Blink thought it a very great compliment, that an officer, who had two doctors in his regiment, ready to give advice gratis, should come to consult him in a case of difficulty. He looked upon this as a good sign; and in order that it might be made the most of, Blink paid a round of visits, and incidentally introduced the circumstance to every one whom he saw. Amongst other friends, on whom Blink called, were the Newshams. He did not see the ladies, but he mentioned Freeport's name to Newsham, and the dreadful state of health—in short, precarious condition in which he then was. Newsham was astounded, as well he might be. The inquiries made, and the replies given, placed it beyond all doubt that Sam was Blink's Freeport, even if there were another in the regiment of that name.

When Mrs. Newsham returned, her husband said, "You will be very sorry to hear that Captain Freeport is in a very precarious condition"

"What?" exclaimed Anne, loudly.

"How do you mean?" said Mrs. Newsham.

"He was here not an hour ago," said Jessie.

"And seemed very well," added Jane.

"No accident, I hope!" said Maria.

"When you have done conjecturing," said Newsham, "I'll enlighten you. But with so many people all talking at once, it is quite impossible to make oneself heard."

Newsham then narrated the particulars of his interview with Blink.

"If he is in Blink's hands," said Anne, "he certainly is in a very precarious state. What could have induced him to go to Blink?"

"Blink is not very bright," remarked Newsham.

"Bright?" said Mrs. Newsham. "No, I should think he was not?"

"I wonder," said Newsham, "if he has made a will, and arranged all his affairs?"

Anne was horrified at the idea. And she ran up stairs, and wrote to Freeport:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry to hear of your sudden illness. Take my advice and have nothing to say to Blink. He is the greatest fool I ever met in my life. I wouldn't trust a cat to his judgment. Now *pray* get rid of him. You have no idea how surprised we were to hear of this. I am afraid you suffered more from your fall than you were willing to confess.

"Believe me, very sincerely,

"*Saturday.*

"ANNE NEWSHAM."

Sam and Harroway had just returned from a billiard room, when this note was put into the former's hand.

"Didn't I tell you, George, she loved me?" said Sam, handing the note to Harroway. "Look at her anxiety when she hears I am ill."

Harroway was vastly amused when he perused Anne Newsham's favour, and the recollection of the scene with Blink made his sides to shake with laughter.

"What am I to say, George?" asked Sam. "How shall I reply to the dear girl's epistle?"

"Tell her the truth," replied Harroway. "Say it was a lark. She'll enjoy it. For evidently Blink is no favourite of hers."

"Do you think I am a fool, George?" responded Freeport. "No, no. If I were to tell the truth, the old governor would fancy that my 20,000*l.* in the funds was all moonshine, and that our acquaintance originated in one of those larks. That'll never do, George."

"Here goes," said Sam. "I'll write her a letter which will entail a lengthy correspondence; and there's nothing on earth so delightful as writing to, and hearing from, a girl that you really like—unless it be talking to her."

Sam then wrote as follows, and read out to Harroway as he proceeded.

"MY DEAR MISS ANNE NEWSHAM,—Your note has occasioned in me surprise and delight. Surprise that you should hear I am ill, delight that my supposed sufferings should awaken your sympathy. I am happy to say that I never felt better in the whole course of my life.

"I shall see you in church to-morrow morning, but as we have to walk there and back like so many children, I shall not be able to speak to you before noon.

"With regards and compliments to Mrs. Newsham, believe me very sincerely yours

"*Saturday.*

"S. FREEPORT."

It was nearly nine, when from his dressing-room window George Harroway espied Blink, asking questions of a sergeant, evidently as to the whereabouts of Captain Freeport's quarters.

"Sam! Sam!" roared Harroway, "here's Blink, by all that's beautiful!"

"Blew!" cried out Sam. "Mind if the doctor asks you how I am this morning, say I'm as right as a trivet. The medicine was magic."

"Faith, I will, sir," said Blew.

"There's a step on the stair. Show him in, Blew," said Sam.

Blew met Blink on the landing. Sure enough he put the very question which the foxy Freeport anticipated, and he received the prepared answer.

"How are you, Mr. Blink?" said Sam. "Sit down; take a chair, and a cup of coffee—and a weed."

"I am glad to see you so much better," said Blink.

"Better!" cried Sam; "I never was so astonished in my life. I took the draught last night, went to bed at eight o'clock, and slept like a top till five this morning, and awoke feeling strong and hungry; and if you'll stay till breakfast, which is on the very point of coming on table, you'll see me make away with half a dish of beefsteaks."

"It was witchcraft," said Harroway.

"It was *some* craft or other," continued Sam. "Here's a man one day not fit to crawl, and the next in robust health, and able to walk a mile and a half. What system do you call that, Blink? Curing a man slick off with one dose—Homœopathy, or what?"

"Oh dear, no! The Homœopathic system is the reverse of my system."

What! Do you mean to say the Homœopathic system *kills* a fellow

the first dose? By Jove, what a system! Harroway, do you hear that? Here are the steaks, hissing hot. Blink, a steak?"

Blink drew his chair to the table. He had already breakfasted; but the gravy and Harvey sauce looked so tempting he could not refuse.

"How the deuce did you manage it?" said Sam, eating and talking as fast as possible.

"What?" asked Blink.

"To cure me in that extraordinary way."

"I knew what was the matter with you," responded Blink, "the moment I looked into your eye."

"The deuce you did! What—was there a greenish hue spread over the surface of the pupil? You are sure it was not the liver?"

"Quite sure."

"Well, what was it?"

"Why, it's an entirely new disease."

"Well, but *what*? I think a man has every right to know what has been the matter with him."

"It was fever in the gizzard."

This conversation was more than Harroway could listen to without laughing, so he made a hasty retreat to the next room.

"Have you got out a patent for that medicine?" asked Sam.

"No, but I mean to do so."

"And I'd lose no time, if I were you. I'll give you a certificate of the effect it had on me. But there's one thing; I should not like you to mention that I have consulted you, as our doctors would be jealous. You must know what jealous fellows all professional men are!"

Blink agreed to maintain silence, and shortly after took his departure.

Freeport got ready for church, and was on the point of going down stairs, when an enormous Newfoundland dog, called "Sailor," the property of Harroway, jumped up, and placed his dirty paws on the breast of Sam's jacket.

"Here's a business," said Sam. "Look here—d——n the dog—I can't go to church in this condition; and the hooking and eyeing of this affair is a matter of twenty minutes *at least*."

"Come as you are," said Harroway. "Nobody will take notice. It will be dry before we get to church. Come along."

"The brute ought to be taught better manners," said Sam. "He ought to be cured of these tricks by a single dose. He's got fever in the gizzard, George. Let's give him Blink's specific. Blew, bring the bottle!"

Harroway was curious to see the effect the medicine would have upon the animal, and therefore made no objection to Freeport's administering it, as he did through the wine funnel. They then marched to church with the regiment.

CHAPTER IV.

ON returning from church, George Harroway went to luncheon with the colonel, and Sam Freeport sought his own rooms preparatory to going down to see the Newshams. He was met at the entrance to his quarters by Blew, who said, "This is a fearful business, sir; I don't know what Mr. Harroway will say."

"What's the matter *now*?" inquired Sam.

"Sailor's a corpse, sir!"

"A what?"

"A dead corpse—without a particle of life in it. That physic must have been a strong poison, sir!"

Sam stood, and became very pale.

"You had not been gone five minutes, sir," said Blew, "before the poor creature laid down and rolled in the agonies of spasms; but in less than an hour his sufferings were ended, for he died on the hearth-rug before the fire, and there he lies now, till Mr. Harroway sees him, and orders him decent burial. If the dog was analyzed, I am pretty sure he'd be found to contain poison."

Freeport went upstairs, and sure enough there was poor Sailor, stretched out in death. Sam was extremely annoyed; for the dog was a great favourite with himself as well as his chum.

"Go, and fetch Dr. Blink," said Sam to Blew, describing the street, and the house, and the brass plate. "Run! say I have got a relapse."

Blink was not long in responding to the call. He brought with him another draught, which he hoped to administer to the patient; for he carried it in his hand into the room.

"You are a pretty fellow to make up medicines!" said Sam, half laughing and half annoyed. "Here is a work of desolation for you." (He pointed to the dog). "I wouldn't have taken a hundred guineas for him; and here you go and settle him with one dose. What's that, *another* in your hand?"

Blink was naturally taken all aback.

"The fact is this," said Sam; "I had a suspicion of your physic—a sort of presentiment, and I didn't take it. After you left this I gave it to that dog; and when we returned from church, the dog was found dead."

Blink wanted to laugh it off; but Sam said, "Now, look here." (He took the phial from Blink's hand.) "Is this from the same bottle?"

"It is."

"Then if I give it to a dog, and he dies within half an hour, will you be satisfied this is *poison*?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Why, because what would poison a dog wouldn't poison a man."

"What—a dog as big as that? Look at his size."

"Its the formation of the stomach."

"Well, will *you* consent to take a couple of table spoonsful of the mixture?"

"Why, no, because I have no fever in the gizzard. And that, of course, accounts for the death of the dog. The medicine was intended to act on a diseased gizzard. The dog's gizzard probably is in good order; and, if so —"

"The medicine would stick in it, and kill him, eh?"

"You had better have the dog analyzed, sir, by the assistant-surgeon, sir," suggested Blew.

This threw Blink in a state of excitement and alarm. He kept his prussic acid near one of the medicines which formed this draught; and it was just possible that he had made the mistake, as the two were of the



SAM GIVES SAILOR DOCTOR BLINK'S DRAUGHT.

same colour and appearance. So it turned out. Blink begged Sam not to mention the circumstance, as it would be his ruin; and Sam not only promised him to be silent, but he made Harroway make a similar promise, before he would let him into the particulars of the dog's demise.

"There's a fatality, Sam, hanging over all your acts in York," s Harroway. "I mean as far as I am concerned."

"How so?"

"Why, in the course of three days, you have deprived me of my horse, and made me pay one guinea for the destruction of my favou. dog."

"You draw such gloomy pictures of life," said Sam, "that you make me quite melancholy. Here have I introduced you to a most amiable and agreeable family, and this summing up of your losses is the ungrateful return."

Harroway reproached himself, as he looked in Sam's good humoured and benevolent face, and slapping him on the back he observed: "Well, never mind, old boy."

"George," said Sam, "you could do me a very great favour."

"What is it?"

"Why, keep away from the hunt to-morrow morning. You can easily say we have drills and parades."

"Why should I do that?"

"Because I cannot manage this jumping business, and it will look so odd if you go and I stay away. I cannot stick on a beast's back when he leaps."

"You have not practised, Sam; that's the reason. Stick your knees well in, keep your hands well down, and throw yourself back as soon as the horse springs, and it is as easy as cribbage."

"I don't mind being scratched and bruised; but I funk my neck, George."

"Nonsense. Join the field. That little horse will carry you beautifully. He looks a most plucky little animal."

"Like his dear mistress," said Sam. "Well, I suppose I must go; for it would look very bad to stay away after making an engagement with her."

The morning came, the horses were saddled, and a four-mile walk commenced by Sam and George Harroway. When they reached the place where the hounds met, they beheld a good concourse of men in red coats, and four ladies in dark green habits. These were "the Newsham girls" as they were called. Anne rode up to Sam and bade him good morning, and then spoke to Harroway, and Sam's steed, "Mazeppa."

In half an hour there was a fud, and ere long the fox broke cover, and the hounds were in full cry.

To Sam Freeport's great disgust he could not keep up with Anne and Harroway. They were better mounted than any one in the field, and in aiding neither of them could be well surpassed.

Seeing that he was all behind in the chase, and that it was useless to go on any further, Sam pulled up, and said to himself: "This is not the sport for women to join in, and if she wont give it up I'll think no more about her. George Harroway may have her if he likes. Scratching one's face to pieces, and running the risk of breaking one's neck every

five minutes, is much too serious a business to be called sport. No, no, Anne, you must cut this, or I must cut you."

Extremely vexed, Sam turned round and made for home, which he reached by nine or ten o'clock.

Harroway admired Anne Newsham for the very quality which Sam Freeport disliked. Her skill in handling her horse, her judgment in making points, and thus sparing the animal, while she placed herself well in the field, as far as regarded being in at the death, quite captivated George Harroway; and had he not felt it would be wrong to be a rival of Sam's, he would have made desperate love to her. As it was he was only "very attentive;" and Anne Newsham was equally pleased with George Harroway's horsemanship, and paid him some very pretty compliments, in plain language, while the fox was being torn to pieces.

"What pretty eyes that girl has got!" said Harroway, after they had dined, and he had composed himself snugly in his easy chair.

"What of that?" said Sam. "I know she has."

"And although she does not strike one as being pretty at first, yet when you come to talk to her she has a very charming face. The cheeks are prettily shaped, and her teeth are so white and regular, and her neck is very good, and she talks such good sound sense without any kind of affectation."

"She seems to have made an impression upon you, my dear George. But you need not trouble yourself, old fellow. You would stand a deuced poor chance against me anywhere, George; and in this particular matter, the girl's *gone*, sir, as I told you the other day."

"Well, I know that. But surely there was no harm in my praising her in your presence?"

"Of course not. But young men of your age often flatter yourselves, and here it would be of no use."

"We had a most delightful day."

"I have no doubt you had; but it will be the last you'll have with her, I can tell you. I shall put a stop to her riding for the future."

"Why should you do that?"

"Because I don't like it."

"Do you mean to say you are going to propose to her, Sam?"

"I am; and if she accepts me, it will be on a distinct understanding that she leaves off galloping and jumping and going on like mad in the presence of every body that attends the meet."

"She'll never give up the chase."

"I should like to bet you a mild thousand pound she does if I ask her."

"I won't bet, Sam, because I should win your money; but mark my word, she'll laugh at the proposal fettered with such a condition."

"Well, we shall see."

There was a heavy fall of snow that night, and next morning it froze fearfully hard. This was a gloomy prospect for Harroway, whose heart and soul were in the chase. But for Sam Freeport it was quite the contrary. It put a decided stop to the hunting.

Two days after the conversation just narrated, Freeport called on the Newshams, and took the girls shopping. While the other sisters were engaged selecting silks for dresses for the assize ball, Sam coolly walked Anne out of the shop and down the street, to talk to her on what he called a serious subject.

"You cannot be ignorant," he began, "that I like you very much."

"Yes—I know you do," she replied.

"I more than like you—I *love* you."

"Well, I am not sorry for it, for I feel happy when you are talking to me."

"Will you marry me?"

"I will consider your proposal."

"And we'll be happy?"

"That would depend upon how we agree. I am not extravagant, and far from inconsiderate; but, I am very fond of having my own way, and if I am put out I can show my temper, as well as other people."

"I'll give up everything in the world to you."

"You would be a fool to do that."

"There are some things I should expect you to give up for me."

"Let me hear what they are."

"Hunting and waltzing."

She stared at him in astonishment, and replied—

"Surely you are not serious?"

"Yes I am."

"I would not give up either one or the other for any man living!"

"Just fancy my feelings, if I saw any other man put his arm round your waist."

"Fiddlestick! Why, you waltz yourself!"

"Yes; but that is a different matter."

"No, no. And as for hunting, I couldn't think of giving it up. I've been used to it, and I like it. It's a glorious amusement. You have been smoking this morning, and I am very much mistaken if you have not had a glass of brandy-and-water."

Sam blushed, and acknowledged his weakness, whereon Anne News-ham said—

"Now, suppose I asked you to give up cheroots and the stimulus which diluted spirits affords you—and I dare say, if the truth be known, you have been used to both for the last six or seven years—would you not think me very selfish?"

"Certainly not; I would not touch either of them."

"What nonsense! Now, just fancy, when you had lighted a nice cheroot, if I were to come up and insist on your throwing it away, because I disliked the smell of that horrid tobacco—(I don't dislike it, recollect; on the contrary, I rather like it—but I say suppose)—would you not feel very much disgusted, and think me a very selfish person for debarring you from what was a pleasure? And suppose I saw you walk up to the sideboard—pour a little brandy into the bottom of a tumbler, and then goggle out the water on it from the jug—suppose I was to call out 'What, guzzling again?' would you not wish me further? Of course you would, and very naturally."

"I don't think I should."

"Well, you are too good for me—I judge by my own feelings. Give up waltzing and hunting! You might just as well ask me to pull out all my pretty teeth, shave off all my hair, and wear a bag wig. I couldn't think of it."

"Then accept me unconditionally."

"No. As your wife it would be extremely improper in me to indulge in pleasures which I knew were distasteful to yourself."

"Then you refuse me?"

"Yes."

Sam sighed—said "Very well"—and led her back to the shop, where her sisters were still busily engaged in making purchases.

CHAPTER V.

"GEORGE," said Sam, to Harroway, "I have completely altered my mind. It is possible that my brothers may refuse to pay my debts; and her governor may make some bee-baws and pothooks about a "settlement," which, you know, I could not make, so I have determined to abandon the suit. Poor girl, she'll be, no doubt, a good deal cut up and disappointed; but it will be all for the best in the end, I think."

"Perhaps it will, Sam."

"I should very much like to be married; but, in my circumstances, an heiress or a dowager is absolutely indispensable. As Anne likes hunting, too, it would be unreasonable to ask her to forego it. What do you say?"

"I quite agree with you, Sam."

"I suspect an old lady would suit me best, George. One that would call me *Captain* Freeport—allow me a sort of stipendiary cash credit—go out alone in her carriage, and leave me to do just as I pleased. This assize ball is coming off shortly, and I'll look out there. Meanwhile, I'll make love to the colonel's niece, for the sake of amusement. She's a very fine looking girl, George."

"She's all that, Sam," quoth Harroway, who was rather pleased that he might now make love to Anne Newsham without clashing with his friend Freeport.

The colonel's niece, Miss Winnerly, was not the style of girl that Freeport admired: she was so very timid, meek, and retiring. It was an effort to make her speak up loud enough to be heard. She played very well, and she sang sweetly, when she could be prevailed upon to take courage, and favour the company. She never had the slightest objection to a quadrille; but if any one asked her to waltz, she said "I'd rather not," in a tone which almost implied she was offended—if not shocked—at the bare idea of such a thing.

Sam Freeport was certainly a very weak mortal in matters connected with the heart. He used to say of himself that he was *all* heart; and from the way he used to go on, the saying might be easily believed. He had been to the colonel's house every morning for eight days running; for after Anne Newsham's refusal he never ventured near the family, and to live without ladies' society was more than he felt equal to. There was a cold and distant manner in Miss Winnerly, for which Sam Freeport could not account; but still he persevered in his attentions—the sole object in view being to arouse an affection for him.

The colonel and his wife both thought this would be a very good match. The former poured into Sam's ear the advantage of a married life—the comfort, the happiness, the everything, while the latter sung

the praises of the generous Sam to the young lady for whom they designed him.

Easily caught and easily led, Sam Freeport was worked up to propose; and he did so in such a warm and impressive manner that the young lady accepted him with seeming gladness. Everything was arranged speedily; for Sam had nothing to settle, and his intended spouse was not an heiress. Nor was there anything on either side to be given up; at least, the parties never asked each other questions on this head.

The wedding-day was near at hand—the bridal robes had come home—Sam had bought the ring at Barber's, besides a small but tasty collection of jewellery for his bride elect. The colonel had ordered a sumptuous breakfast—the corps was to give them a ball on the return from Thorp-Arch. But lo! one fine morning, the very day before the wedding-day, Miss Winnerly was not to be found. They searched the house, they looked down the well, they opened a large oak chest which the colonel kept his books and papers in; but, alas! Miss Winnerly was nowhere to be found!

Sam said, "I'm blowed if I can account for this!"

The colonel evidently suspected something, but didn't like to speak his mind. George Harroway had been let into the secret by Blew, who didn't dare mention it to his master; nevertheless, George held his tongue, and left them to their own imaginings.

Sam thought the best way to show his grief would be to keep his bed, and pretend to live on gruel, sago, and arrowroot.

The second evening after Miss Winnerly's mysterious disappearance, the colonel called on Sam, and said,

"My dear Freeport, I have at last discovered the truth. I can well understand your disappointment, but you must cheer up, and make the best of it. We shall always look upon you as our nephew, and our house will, as usual, always be yours. It is a very fearful business, very fearful!"

"What, has she drowned herself?" said Sam.

"No," replied the colonel. "Worse than that."

"Good Heavens! what can have happened?" said Sam. "Put me out of my misery by telling me the worst. Has she cut her throat?"

"I wish she had," sighed the colonel.

"You'll drive me mad," said Sam, "if you keep me any longer in suspense."

"The fact is, Freeport," said the colonel—"the fact is that——she has eloped with the band-master to Gretna Green!"

Sam Freeport groaned heavily—pulled the counterpane over his head—and laughed hysterically!

The colonel said "Bear it like a man."

"Bear it!" said Sam, exposing his head; "what a lucky thing, to be sure!"

"What do you mean?" inquired the astounded colonel.

"Why, they might have gone off afterwards. Consider what an awful business *that* would have been!"

The band-master, it would seem, had taught Miss Winnerly, to play on the piano.

The assize ball came on, and Sam sallied forth in search of an heiress or a dowager. The first person he met, on entering the room, was Anne

Newsham, on the arm of Harroway, who could not resist telling Anne the story just narrated. Anne extended her hand to Freeport, and Sam shook it warmly.

"May I condole with you?" said she.

"Condole? No!" replied Sam. "But you may congratulate me on having escaped; within the last fortnight, poison and something worse."

The band struck up, and Harroway and Anne took their places.

"Brilliant assembly!" remarked Freeport to a youth whom he had not seen before.

"Very," replied the youth.

"Great many people here whom I have never seen."

"Yes—very many people, like myself, are visitors in York."

"Oh, that accounts for it. Who is that lady with the tiara of diamonds and emeralds?"

"That's Mrs. Missevery."

"Fine looking old girl! Where does she come from?"

"She comes from a place called 'The Cliffs,' about six miles from this."

"Where's her husband?"

"That I can't say—he's dead!"

"What was he?"

"He was the owner of large ironworks, to the westward."

That was quite sufficient to make Freeport keen for her acquaintance. He walked up to a sleepy looking steward, who seemed to take no interest in his office, and borrowing his favour, Sam pinned it, conspicuously, on the breast of his coat. He then sought a young ensign, and insisted on his being led up to the old lady and introduced.

"Ask her to dance," said Sam. "She's sure to refuse you, and then you can walk away as soon as you like."

The willing youth, Mr. Wilson, obeyed his superior officer, and was duly presented to Mrs. Missevery as Lord Arthur Bloomfield. He could scarcely keep from laughing in her face when he said, "May I have the pleasure of dancing the next quadrille with you?"

The old lady bowed, thanked him, but declined.

Ere five minutes had elapsed, Captain Freeport and Mrs. Missevery were in close and animated conversation. Sam found out whom she liked in the room—and praised them. He also discovered whom she *disliked*—and pulled them to pieces.

"Do dance one quadrille with me?" said Sam.

"I have not danced for years."

"That's the greater reason you should dance now."

The lady smiled and wavered, and Freeport offered his arm, and carried her along with him.

Mrs. Missevery was plain, stout, and vulgar; but good natured.

The attentions of young men, especially if they were chatty, and good-looking people, like Freeport, pleased her, and she was somewhat vain that an officer who could know nothing about her wealth should prefer her society to that of younger and better-looking members of her sex.

"Do you know the Newshams?" asked Mrs. Missevery.

"Slightly—yes."

"Do you think the girls good looking?"

"Why I can hardly say."



CAPTAIN FREEPORT TALKS TO MRS. MISSEVERY.

"For my part, I cannot see what people have to admire in them."

"Oh! there's nothing whatever to admire in them, if you mean that."

"Not the slightest pretensions to beauty."

"Not the slightest; on the contrary, I should say they were plain."

"So I say. But you will get very few people to agree with you."

"Never mind. I'll back our taste against that of those who hold a contrary opinion. Wouldn't you?"

"Certainly I should. But they ride very well."

"So do my stable boys," said Sam, satirically.

This delighted Mrs. Missevery, who was a butt of Anne Newsham's.

"That's rather a pretty girl," said she, looking towards a very beautiful young creature of about eighteen or nineteen.

"Decidedly," replied Sam. "But, do you know, I dislike girls? They talk such nonsense. They are so insipid—and, as my cousin, Lord Byron, used to say,

" 'The nursery lips out in all they utter,
And then they always smell of bread and butter!'

"Oh no. Till they pass thirty, they have not a single companionable charm: at least, in *my* opinion they have not."

Mrs. Missevery thought Sam one of the most sensible men she had ever seen in a red coat; and though she had never given much of her attention to Lord Byron's works, she was glad to have made the acquaintance of his cousin.

"Would you like any particular set of quadrilles?" asked Sam, who always had charge of the band, a circumstance which made the bandmaster's proceedings the more absurd and ridiculous.

"No thank you. I like a slower, quieter music. You have a very nice band."

"So do I like slow music. Yes, the band is a very good one—thanks to myself, for I have taken great pains with it. In a few minutes you shall hear a very beautiful piece composed by our own bandmaster, as the air to those beautiful lines of Sir Walter Scott—

" 'Why weep ye by the tide, Ladye?'

"Excuse me for one moment."

Sam walked into the room where the band was playing. "Wilkins," said Sam, to the man who played the clarionet, "what are you going to give us next?"

"A waltz, sir."

"Then, instead of playing a waltz, play 'Jock o' Hazeldean.' Mark that! And if Mr. Harroway, or any body else, tells you to stop, say you are acting under Captain Freeport's orders. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

Sam joined Mrs. Missevery, and awaited the air with much anxiety and inward laughter.

Harroway, with Anne Newsham, passed the door of the music room. He made a motion of the hand as a signal for the band to strike up.

"What on earth is this?" said Anne Newsham, who was expecting something very different to the demi-doleful strain that struck upon the ear of the assembly.

"The band's certainly drunk!" exclaimed George Harroway. "Sit here, Miss Newsham, for a moment, and I will see what they are about."

Harroway walked into the other room, where he found them sober enough; but to his surprise he beheld the French horn, the bassoon, and the first fife, convulsed with laughter, for the men saw the fun.

"What do you mean by this, Wilkins?" said Harroway. "Do you call this a waltz?"

"No, sir. It's by order of the captain," said the man rapidly, and then he applied himself to his instrument, and made it *speak*,

"And she went o'er the waters wide
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean."

The bandmaster's name was Hazeldean.

The thought flashed across George's mind, and he could not help joining in laughter with the French horn, who tried, but without success, to vie with the clarinet in giving effect to Captain Freeport's whim. The poor man was overcome with merriment.

"This must be for Captain Freeport's consolation," said Anne, when her partner came back to her.

"He ordered it to be played, it seems," said George. "It is just like him."

"Really, he is the oddest man I ever saw," said Anne. "Where is he?"

"Yonder—mark the action of his hand. See how he is talking to that old lady in the false hair."

"I declare he has got hold of that old hag, Mrs. Missevery! Such a monster! The most disgusting creature in existence! The greatest enemy I have in the world! Perhaps the only one! I feel jealous. I do indeed!"

"Don't say that," said George Harroway, rather nettled by the remark. "If you are jealous of her, I shall be jealous of him."

"What stuff!" was Anne's reply. "My sister Jessie, who is a very knowing hand, says you are all only birds of passage, and it just suits your book to make yourselves agreeable for the time being; and after what I have seen, I am inclined to believe her. Captain Freeport, you know, said all sorts of pretty things to me, only the other day, and look at him now. Look—look! He is certainly going to kiss her. Look at him. Look! And see how the old hag is coquetting. What a funny, foolish world it is, to be sure."

George sighed, as he looked at the artificial flowers which were tacked at the top of Anne Newsham's white muslin dress.

"Why do you sigh?" she asked. "You'll make me yawn."

The smitten subaltern made a bold reply, which pleased the girl, although she distrusted him. She admired his large languishing eyes, as much as his courage and skill in the field.

"The hounds meet the day after to-morrow," she observed, "and if your feelings don't go with this delightful thaw, talk to me then."

"That is understood," said Harroway, emphatically. "Now, then, we'll have a waltz in earnest. There they go. Come along."

CHAPTER VI.

"Who is that young man dancing with Anne Newsham?" asked Mrs. Missevery.

"That's George Harroway," replied Sam; "but you don't mean to say you call him young?"

"Why, he can't be more than three or four and twenty."

"He'll never see five and thirty again. Certainly not. Let me see. He is just one year and a half my junior."

"You wear uncommonly well. I should not have taken either of you to be thirty."

"The dress has a great deal to do with it. It makes a man look very much younger than he really is."

"What age, now, would you take *me* to be?" asked Mrs. Missevery (with a smile), drawing herself up, and sitting as erect as possible.

"Why, I am very seldom out," said Sam. "Let me see. Why, I should say I had the advantage of you by four or five years."

Mrs. Missevery shook her head.

"Not so much as that?" suggested Sam.

"We are within one year," said the lady.

The fact was Mrs. Missevery was forty-seven; but according to her own account she was only seven and *thirty*.

"I hope you don't think thirty-seven old," said Sam.

"No; but it is not young," she replied.

"We've still enough of life and life for some gay soarings yet," quoted the insinuating Sam.

"I hope so."

"Let's have a trial in this waltz," said Sam; and before the lady had time to deny him, she was on her legs, and whisked round the room with the rest of the dancers. Mrs. Missevery had never waltzed in her life before: of the step she had not the most remote idea; but she did her best, and held on by Sam's epaulette, as though it was for her very life.

Anne Newsham gave vent to her feelings in a scream which rang through the Assembly Rooms. "The idea—the vanity of that old cat!" she said to her partner. "The idea! she must be mad! Who could ever have thought the old goose would be guilty of such a misdemeanour? Look! she has her eyes shut. She must be getting giddy. I should like to see them come down. This is too much. I must sit down to enjoy the fun."

Mrs. Missevery *was* giddy; for when Sam brought her up, she still held on by the epaulette, and fancied everybody was walking on the ceiling. When she "came to," she observed Anne Newsham laughing at her, and another poor girl in hysterics, and the subject of a scene herself. Mrs. Missevery darted a look of indignation at Anne, and then remarked to Sam, "Really, the bold effrontery of that girl, Anne Newsham, is beyond everything!"

Sam agreed, and took her to the refreshment table, where he told her she waltzed with a lighter step than any one in the room.

Freeport was of the same opinion as Butler as to the way that widows should be wooed, and he therefore determined to carry Mrs. Missevery and her "iron works to the westward," by assault.

"I should like to have you as a partner for life," said Sam.

Mrs. Missevery smiled.

"But I fear," he added, "that some other is more fortunate."

"I am at my own disposal," said Mrs. Missevery, proudly.

"Would that you were at mine!" ejaculated Sam.

Mrs. Missevery distended her aged eyelids, and her "adorer" handed her to a retired part of the room; and before he led her forth to the next dance, she was "engaged" to him.

She informed him that she had a good fortune; which made him declare that he despised wealth, and never thought of it when happiness was the object in view.

When the ball was over, Sam saw Mrs. Missevery to her carriage. Just before he closed the door, he contrived to impart a kiss on the glove of her left hand.

"Well, Sam, how did you enjoy yourself?" inquired Harroway, when they got home, at about three o'clock in the morning.

"Never enjoyed myself more in my life," was the reply.

"What was the meaning of making that old woman waltz? You were nearly the death of poor Anne."

"Why, I wanted to turn her head, preparatory to making an inroad upon her heart. She is worth a mint of money, and no end of iron works to the westward."

"Well, have you succeeded?"

"Of course. I never was refused in my life. The thing is settled, sir. She's mine."

"How she clutched you in the waltz!"

"Didn't she! And, by Jove, George, only look at the condition she has left the bullion in; and no end of 'em are gone! Never mind, she'll make it all good by and bye! There's nothing like iron, after all. I say, did you notice her diamonds? Wouldn't they make fine shirt studs!"

Harroway was too deeply engaged in thinking of Anne to take much heed of Freeport's discourse. The girl had made him love her, and he longed for the next meeting of the hounds.

Freeport called on his betrothed, and made himself remarkably agreeable. She invited him to "The Cliffs" (her "beautiful estate"), whither she purposed proceeding on the morrow.

Sam expressed the great delight he should experience in seeing her in her own home, and accepted the invitation.

That "horrid Anne Newsham" was the principal theme on which Mrs. Missevery touched, and (laughing all the while in his heart) Freeport gave her great encouragement to pursue the subject.

The hounds met the very day that Sam paid his visit to "The Cliffs." After a run of two or three miles, George Harroway and Anne paired off towards a point which the fox was not likely to make, and left the field entirely.

The girl pulled up, and, looking tenderly in his face, said, "Now then, what are you going to say? Don't tell me anything you don't mean. But, before you begin, I ought to tell you what passed between Captain Freeport and myself a day or two before the ball. It is right you should know it at first, because it might influence you hereafter."

She then informed him of all that passed—Sam's proposal, and her subsequent refusal.

The disclosure made Harroway laugh; at the same time it strengthened

his regard for the honest-hearted girl, with whom he felt he could be happy. He then told her of what he was possessed. She said she was glad he was wealthy, for she had a horror of poverty.

Harroway intimated that he would ask her father's consent, which would be granted as a matter of course.

"You may ask him," said the girl. "But if he refused, it would be of no consequence. They have taught us to do as we like, and we are too old now to forget the lesson. There's a prospect for you! What do you say to that?"

"I'm content to take my chance," replied Harroway.

"Why, what's the meaning of this?" cried the girl. "The fox went round the bottom of yonder hill, and here they come, pressing him hard. Bravo! we are in at the death after all! How vexed my sisters will be! They are not here! Don't tell them this was all luck, but judgment; and mark how vigorously they will argue the point."

CHAPTER VII.

WHETHER it was the over exertion at the ball—an exertion she was not accustomed to—or whether it was the excitement which her forthcoming wedding occasioned—or whether it was neither the one nor the other, it is impossible to say: but when Freeport reached the Cliffs, he found Mrs. Missevery "rather poorly." She had a severe headache, and complained of slight fever. Sam very tenderly told her she should be careful of herself; but she declared that she never gave way to illness; and after luncheon, she put on her shawl and bonnet, and showed her husband elect all over the estate. It was her wont to be wheeled about in a Bath chair, but on this occasion she walked, and leant upon Freeport's arm. It was truly a very nice estate, and it was kept in excellent order. The gravel walks of the garden were so nicely rolled, and the trees even were "tidiness" itself. Freeport praised everything; but more than once he exclaimed, "But what are these compared with yourself! They bring comfort with them, it is true; but happiness flows from another spring. It comes from a kindred concatenation of ideas, and a reciprocity of sentiment."

Mrs. Missevery fancied the air had done her good, and towards evening her spirits mounted higher.

Sam parted with her in the library, which was well stocked with elegantly bound and gold lettered books.

The next day, Freeport's anxiety led him early to "The Cliffs." He was grieved to the heart to find that Mrs. Missevery was now very unwell. The expression of his face was sorrowful in the extreme, and he was kindness and attention personified. He read the "Corsair" to her, and several other minor poems by the same author; and he wrung from her a promise that she would take medical advice. She mentioned "Mr. Blink," a rising young man, of whom she had heard a very high opinion expressed. Sam said he had never had an opportunity of judging of Blink's talent, but that the doctor of his corps was a very able practitioner, and he was sure he would most gladly render his advice, and with her (Mrs. Missevery's) permission, he would bring him to see her on the following day. So pressing and importunate was Freeport in this behalf,

his intended wife consented, and Dr. Flood was introduced to Mrs. Missevery, having been previously warned by Sam that if he didn't cure her quick he would never speak to him again.

Mrs. Missevery did not improve under Dr. Flood's hands; on the contrary, she grew worse, and was in danger—a matter of which she was duly sensible. She sent one night for Newsham, and dismissing her attendants, she spoke with him in private. It was her intention, she said, to leave all her estate, real and personal, to Captain Freeport, of the — Foot, with the exception of a legacy of 10,000*l.* to her nephew. She begged that the will might be drawn up without delay; but enjoined Newsham, as a professional man, not to break a word of this to a soul until after her demise, should such contingency happen.

It did not take Newsham long to draught a will of that kind. He copied it out on half a sheet of paper, and it was duly signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of himself, her steward, and the nurse (the two latter witnesses being ignorant of the will's contents). The anxiety of Freeport was beyond description. He was perfectly wretched.

Mrs. Missevery died—and Sam was so "cut up," he nearly did the same.

Newsham called on Freeport one morning, and found him sitting over the fire in a most lugubrious state of mind. "I have come to condole with you," said Newsham.

"What's the use of condolence," said Sam, "when a man has suffered an irreparable loss? Irreparable, Newsham, irreparable!"

"Oh, I don't know *that*," observed Newsham.

"But I do, my good fellow, and that's enough."

"It's a very fine property," remarked the attorney. "The personalty is considerably above the 10,000*l.* she has disposed of in favour of her nephew."

"Look here, Newsham," said Sam. "No man likes a joke more than I do—but this is past a joke. Don't tantalize me, or I'll get savage."

"No, don't get savage," quoth Newsham, "but listen to this." He withdrew the original will from his pocket, and read as follows:

"I, SUSAN MISSEVERY,

relict of the late John Missevery, late of the Cliffs, in the county of York, do hereby will and bequeath all my estate, real and personal, wheresoever and whatsoever it may be, to Samuel Freeport of the — Regiment of Foot, absolutely and for ever. But I charge the said estate with the following legacy, that is to say the sum of ten thousand pounds to my nephew, Robert Sparrow, of Hollyrook. And I do hereby appoint the said Samuel Freeport to be the sole executor of this my last will and testament. In witness whereof, &c. &c. &c."

"You don't mean to say that is genuine?" said Sam, doubting his own ears as well as Newsham's tongue.

"There's her signature," said Newsham.

"Never saw it before in my life. But if *you* know it, that's enough. Now, then, what's to be done? Have a glass of Madeira and a biscuit."

"You must take out probate," said Newsham.

"What's probate?"

"You must get the will proved in the diocese. But if you like to leave it to me, I'll have it arranged for you."

"Well, do, like a good fellow. Who'd have thought it, eh?"

"I knew of it seven days ago."

"Then, why didn't you tell me?"

"Because I was enjoined not to do so. There's a time for all things, Freeport."

"So there is, Newsham. You are quite right. Everything is mine, except 10,000*l.*, eh? Very well, I am satisfied. She was a good old creature."

All the attorneys in York were so jealous that Newsham should get the "pickings" out of the testator's estate, that they declared Mrs. Missevery was not of sound mind when she signed the will. This reached the nephew's ear, and he took advice as to whether he could not set the will aside, and claim the whole property as heir at law, and several learned gentlemen said that they were of opinion "if the testator were not of sound mind the will might be set aside, but if the testator were of sound mind, it could not be set aside." They further remarked that "the sanity or otherwise would form the subject of a special issue," and recommended "if the will were contested that a special jury should be applied for."

The nephew of Mrs. Missevery was determined to go to law, and a "caveat"—(that is what they called it)—was entered in the Ecclesiastical Court. Sam was extremely annoyed at these proceedings; but Newsham assured him there was no danger, as the onus of proof would lie on the other side, and no single act of the lady's could be brought forward in support of her insanity. Sam said he was ready to swear she was the most rational woman he ever met; and Newsham coincided with him entirely. When the case was ripe for trial, however, Freeport began to grow nervous, and suggested to his attorney that "it would be advisable to have a compromise with the fellow."

Newsham said, "I think you are very foolish."

"Not at all," replied Sam. "I should not like the thing brought before the public. Let him consent to give me the 10,000*l.* and the jewels and the plate, and I'll give up everything else. I'd give up *all*, but the fact is, Newsham, I find my father has not left me anything, and I can't afford it. My brothers are all rich men, and I have not a sixpence."

"Well," said Newsham, "if you are determined on a compromise, let *me* manage it."

"Do, like a good fellow, Newsham," said Sam; "I don't want to be hard, you know. Settle it. Settle it amicably."

Newsham attended to his instructions. He had agreed that the nephew was to take the real estate, and give up to his (Newsham's) client the whole of the personalty, 17,500*l.* in the funds—the jewellery and plate—the furniture, carriages, horses, &c. &c. &c.

Freeport signed "a release," which by the way he never looked at, and Newsham paid him over 10,000*l.*, gave him the tiara of diamonds and emeralds, and a few old rings—the carriage and the horses—and—the residue he put into his own pocket!

It was thus that Sam Freeport gave up some 28,000*l.* worth of real property, independent of the *bonus* taken by Newsham.

George Harroway was a remarkably close man in his private affairs—the very reverse of his friend Freeport in this particular; and he never

once hinted to any one that he had any idea of matrimony, or any partiality for Anne Newsham. The young lady had also been silent on the subject, even with the members of her own family; for Harroway had given her a very good reason why the matter should not be talked about just then.

Sam Freeport persuaded himself that Anne had still a slumbering love for him—which he might as well awaken, and while he was about it, put the question—get accepted—and then married. He had business to settle with Newsham the morning that he made the above resolve, and he thought he might as well communicate to his “father-in-law—that was to be,” the matter which hovered about his heart.

“Very well, Newsham, I understand all about this,” said Sam, folding up a long deed which the attorney had explained. “And I have signed it, and it’s all right. But there’s another little matter I should like to talk to you about, Newsham. All through my life I have been straightforward and honest.”

“Nothing like it,” said Newsham, “and I look upon that 10,000*l.* you are to receive as the reward. Yes, there is truth in the proverb, ‘Honesty is the best policy, and virtue reaps her own reward.’”

“Never mind virtue,” said Sam impetuously. “Look here, Newsham. You are of course aware that I proposed to your daughter Anne, and that she would not have me at any price?”

“What!” exclaimed the astonished father. “Surely you are mistaken.”

“Not I. I never was mistaken in my life. Certainly not in a business of that kind. She must have mentioned it.”

“Not she,” said Newsham. “You don’t know that girl, Freeport. I’ll be bound she never mentioned it to a soul.”

“She is assuredly a great trump,” observed Sam. “I like her ten times better than ever. Well Newsham, what I was going to say is this. I feel very much disposed to renew the suit. I’ve got this ten thousand pounds, and I dare say you would give her two or three thousand pounds more, and on the interest of that money and my pay, we should be able to make it out very comfortably.”

“You ought to,” remarked Newsham.

“Well then,” said Sam, “if you have no objection, I’ll try her again. Of course you must be aware—and so must she—that although I liked Mrs. Missevery very much, and all that sort of thing you know, Newsham, nevertheless the disparity of years, and one thing or other, rendered it absurd to suppose that I was very deeply in love with her. Do you understand, Newsham? Do you see?”

“Oh, perfectly,” said Newsham—“perfectly.”

“Then you’ll put in your good parental word for me,” suggested Sam.

“Why, yes. I’ll leave her to act as she pleases; but I’ll say the match would give me great satisfaction, and get her mother to say the same.”

“Give us your hand,” cried Sam. “I’ll come down quietly to-morrow morning and breakfast with you, and perhaps you will manage to get me an opportunity of putting the question?”

Newsham said, “Oh yes. That shall be done.”

After a little further conversation, Freeport left Newsham, and proceeded to his quarters, where he found George Harroway reading the last new novel.

"I say George," said Sam, "what was the price you put upon the grey that I gave to that trump of a girl, Anne Newsham?"

"Nothing, Sam. Don't mention it. I have had such pleasure in seeing the dear girl ride him, that more than once I have been glad to think you made her the present."

"That's all very well, George; but circumstances render it necessary and proper that I should pay you for him, and as I have the money, I wish to do so."

"What circumstances?"

"Why, look here, George. Anne Newsham will be mine, after all. I have this moment got her governor's consent, and the mother, too, is all on my side."

"You don't say so?"

"It's a fact, sir."

"Really?"

Sam asseverated so strongly that George believed him on that occasion.

"Under these circumstances," said George, "you ought to pay for him. He cost me 400 guineas, and I don't want to make anything by him."

"Here you are," said Sam, writing out a cheque for the amount. "What a nice thing it is to have money in a bank to draw on, eh, George?"

"So you have resolved to have Anne, after all?" remarked Harroway, folding up the cheque, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket. "Well, Sam, I wish you luck and happiness with her. But have you said anything to Anne herself on the subject?"

"Not yet; but she'll accept me, sir. Who could resist a man like me?" Freeport rose from his chair, confronted the mirror, and while he arranged his scarf, and adjusted his collar, he sang the chorus of his favourite (by the way his only) song.

" 'Tis thus I play the enchanter's part,
And scatter bliss around;
And not a tear or aching heart
Shall in the world be found."

"George, why don't you take to playing the enchanter's part?"

"It is so difficult, Sam."

"Nonsense, man, strike up to Jane—she is a jolly girl, too. What's the use of remaining single? Blew!"

"Sir!"

"Go over and tell the major I shall dine with him this evening."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE moment Freeport left the room, Harroway made his toilet, and drove down to the Newshams. The girls were not at home, and George gleaned from Mrs. Newsham that they had gone to the bookseller's. He drove there, and found them buying cardboard and pencils. Anne was taken aside, and informed of "Sam's intentions."

"I would give the world to be present when he makes the declara-

tion," said Harroway. "Could not you contrive to conceal me under the sofa, or behind a curtain?"

Anne wrinkled her intelligent brow, and laughed with those sparkling and speaking grey eyes of hers.

"I'll write to you, dear George, to-night," she whispered, "after my father has spoken to me."

The words "Dear George"—the first endearing sentence she had ever expressed to Harroway—almost made him giddy, and he prudently hurried away from her presence, lest he should make a fool of himself before her sisters.

Harroway was engaged to dine with the colonel, but he made an excuse and stayed at home, anxiously awaiting Anne's letter. Nine o'clock came, and no signs of it. Ten o'clock, and no letter came. Eleven—Sam came home singing all the way up the stairs, "the enchanter's part." Harroway pretended to be asleep. Sam tried to awake him, but he would not be aroused. Presently, he heard Sam stealing away on tip-toe, and, half opening one eye, he saw him take the cork out of the brandy bottle, and burn it over the candle. Harroway knew that Sam intended to black him, but still he would not stir. Freeport approached him, and hummed. "It's thus I'd play" (he gave George an immense eye-brow) "the enchanter's part"—(another eye-brow)—"and scatter bliss" (a streak down the nose) "a rou-u-n-nd." (Moustache.) "And not a tear" (an imperial) "or aching heart" (a touch on the right cheek) "should in the world" (a touch on the left cheek) "be found!" (a spot on the forehead).

It was very difficult for George to keep his countenance during this performance; nevertheless, he managed it until Sam retired, chuckling, and singing away as lustily as possible.

In less than ten minutes, Freeport was sound asleep, and snoring. Harroway then got up, and taking Sam's own cork, proceeded to his bed-side, and then and there repaid the compliment. Scarcely had he returned to his easy chair, when he heard a footstep in the passage. The door was opened, and a servant appeared, holding in his hand a letter.

Harroway took it from him, and read as follows—

"MY DEAR GEORGE,—Sure enough all you told me is quite true. I am to see Captain Freeport to-morrow morning. My father and mother are decidedly of opinion he will make me a very good husband, and I have feigned to yield to their wishes, and accept his offer. I give advice to, and doctor nearly all the old women in York; and if you will dress yourself up in the clothes I send you, you will readily gain admittance about half-past eight. Mind you go round by the gate, to the back door, and ask for *Miss Anne*. I will contrive to conceal you in the little sitting-room, where I intend to listen to my Sammy's vows. It is twelve o'clock, and I am shivering with cold. So good night, my dear George, and believe me, for ever, your Anne.

"P.S.—We breakfast at nine. If you could manage to be here at about a quarter-past, and send in a note for me, I could come out, and arrange it beautifully."

"There's a carpet-bag for you, sir," said the servant.

"Then bring it here," said Harroway.

The carpet-bag was produced, and when the servant had departed, its contents were examined. There was an old drugget gown, a red shawl, a cap, and a dingy black silk bonnet. The turn out was typical of an old woman in want of assistance. Harroway concealed the garb furnished by Anne, and sought his couch. As for sleeping, it was out of the question, and he did not attempt it.

At daylight, Sam Freeport came into Harroway's room (as was his wont) for coffee.

"Why, you must have been drunk last night, George," said Sam, after opening the shutter, and seating himself at the foot of George's bed.

"What makes you think that, Sam?"

"Why, somebody has been blacking your face. I never saw such a figure in the whole course of my life. Get up, and look at yourself in the glass."

"Well, I confess I was a little overcome, Sam; but you *must* have been in the same condition."

"Never! Nobody ever saw *me* drunk!"

"Then, how comes your face to be blacked also?"

Sam got up and went to the dressing table.

"I say, George," said Sam, mysteriously, and bringing the looking-glass to the bedside—"look here! The fellow that blacked you must have blacked me; for we seem to be both touched up alike."

Such a figure as George Harroway was, in the adopted apparel, it would be very difficult to describe. Verily, he looked "a monster." Anne did not keep him long waiting, for she anticipated the cook's message, and left the breakfast table as soon as she heard loud voices in the kitchen.

In the small sitting-room, where the scene was to be enacted, there was a large couch, with a loose brown holland cover—and under that couch crawled George Harroway.

"Make yourself as comfortable as you can," said Anne. "Here, take the pillows. We shall not be long, for he looks very impatient to put the question to me. Now, don't laugh, or you'll spoil it all."

* * * * *

Newsham and his wife left the breakfast-room, and Freeport told Anne that he wished to speak to her in private.

"What can you have to say to me?" said Anne, leading him into the little room.

"I want to talk to you quietly," said Sam, as they both sat down upon the couch.

"Well," said she.

"Be mine!" said Sam, seizing her hand.

She looked at him, and said, in a serious tone, "Captain Freeport, do you really think I could marry a murderer?"

"A what?"

"A murderer. It is commonly reported, and generally believed, that you killed poor old Mrs. Missevery."

"Nonsense! You don't mean to say that anything so horrid is laid to my charge?"

"They say that you and the doctor of the regiment killed her—at least, that is the story set afloat by Dr. Blink."

"What an ungrateful villain! Mrs. Missevery, it is true, wanted to call him in; but I persuaded her not to do so. You, yourself, said that you would not trust him with a *cat*, and to my knowledge and cost he was not to be trusted with a dog. If the killing of Mrs. Missevery is your only objection, I can soon overcome that."

"Well, but taking your innocence for granted, are you sincere when you say you love me?"

"Sincere? Ay, I never loved a soul in my life except yourself."

"And would you, through long, long years be the same kind and affectionate creature to me that you would now have me to believe?"

"Yes, to the end of the world."

"And never thwart me, nor aggravate me, nor put me out, but just suffer me to do as I pleased, and let me waltz and hunt?"

"Of course I would—for ever and ever."

"Mr. Harroway says you are very fickle."

"Harroway, like most other persons, has his failings as well as his virtues. George is a very good boy—I love him dearly; but, unfortunately, he cannot always confine himself to truth."

"Then you are *not* fickle?"

Sam went upon his knees before Anne Newsham, and made the most impassioned declaration. But just as he was coming to a crisis, George Harroway began to imitate a cat, and mewed most piteously.

"Hist! get out!" cried Sam, stamping his foot to frighten away the supposed puss.

"Mew! Mew!! Mew!! Whow-who-o-ou-*whow*!"

"Don't be unkind to the poor cat!" said Anne to Sam, who was getting angry at the interruption.

"I would not hurt the cat for the world," said Sam; "but let me put her out of the room."

"Be gentle with her," said Anne.

"Never fear," replied Sam, lifting up the cover.

No one could have recognised Harroway in his disguise; and when he grinned, Sam fancied it was some old woman who had escaped from the lunatic asylum. His jaw fell; and surprise was stamped upon every feature of his face.

"What is the matter?" inquired Anne, as Freeport withdrew from the couch in amazement. "Say what—what is the matter?" She got up and clasped her hands.

"Pon my soul, the cat's a human being!" said Sam, "or else it is a ghost."

"Not Mrs. Missevery's, I hope!"

"That I can't say; but really it is not very unlike her."

George Harroway resumed his "*mew*," and his "*whow*," and Anne shrieked, pretended to faint, and fell into Freeport's arms. Newsham soon rushed in, followed by the rest of the family. None of them knew *what* to think. How could they? Sam felt most anxious to satisfy them, as speedily as possible, that Anne's alarm was not *his* doing, and he therefore said to Newsham, "Just look under the sofa."

Newsham looked; but he saw nothing. George crawled out the moment Anne shrieked, and contrived to get away from the house *unseen*—except by some of the servants, who took no notice of him.

CHAPTER IX.

HARROWAY got safely home, and speedily divested himself of his disguise. When Freeport made his appearance, he found George busily engaged writing letters.

"Well, Sam, is it all right?" inquired Harroway.

"I am happy to say it is, George; but a most extraordinary thing took place there. Listen to this."

Freeport here narrated very circumstantially all that related to the old woman under the sofa.

"Are you sure that Newsham is not making a fool of you?" said Harroway.

"Quite sure. What makes you think that?"

"Why, they say that he is in league with Mrs. Missevery, who is still living, and that you will never get a farthing of the money."

Freeport stared at George in a stupor.

"It looks very like a trick," continued Harroway.

"And now that I come to put this and that together," said Sam, "I feel disposed to agree with you."

"Have you touched any of the money yet, Sam?"

"No. But it is all there in the bank."

"Not a bit of it. The cheque for four hundred guineas is refused payment, on the ground of 'no assets.'"

"You don't say so?"

"A fact. Old Newsham has probably discovered that you hoaxed him about the 20,000*l.* in the funds, and he has done this as a return; and serve you right."

"But isn't it very strange that Flood should be taken in, too? He saw her, and declared it was impossible she could recover. What's the use of doctors, if they don't know these things, eh?"

"Not at all strange. You know how easy it is to deceive a doctor, and make yourself out very ill, when you are as well as can be."

"Very true, George; yes, you're right. But I am not going to let that pettyfogging old vagabond play me a trick of this kind without telling him my mind. Give me a sheet of paper. Mr. Newsham, sir, — What shall I say, George?"

"Oh, don't be intemperate, but *facete*. Just say—

"SIR,—When you see Mrs. Missevery again, which I trust will be before long, give my love to her. It was not a bad joke of yours—that of killing the old girl for my benefit; but as I cannot touch the money, why—

I remain, yours, in great disgust,

"S. FREEPORT."

Sam wrote the above, and despatched it. The following is the reply it elicited. Newsham was indebted to his daughter Anne for the suggestion:—

"SIR,—From the tenour and substance of your note, I believe you to be an insane person; and if you remain in York, I shall apply to the authorities to have a restraint placed upon your actions.

"Yours obediently,

"J. NEWSHAM."

"Here's a go," cried Sam. "He says I'm mad, George. I must insist on his making an apology; and if he don't I'll —; no, I won't touch him, because he's Anne's father."

Harroway, fearing the joke might be carried too far, let his friend into the whole secret. Freeport had played so many tricks off upon George, that he could not be angry; and when he found out that the money was not a delusion, but in the bank, he laughed very heartily. To face the Newshams again was more than even Freeport's coolness was equal to; and a circumstance soon occurred that took him to London.

The colonel heard of the band having played "Jock o' Hazeldean," and he was very wroth with Sam. He gave an order that the band should not go out again to parties; and a hint was dropped that, for the future, Captain Freeport would not be allowed to go away whenever he pleased, to be absent continually from parade, and in total ignorance of everything that related to his company and the regiment.

The major, who was a great friend of Freeport's, advised him to exchange, if he couldn't make up his mind to conform; "for," said he, "if you ever give the colonel another chance, he will not fail to bring you to a court martial."

"As for exchanging," said Sam, "I might get out of the frying-pan into the fire; and as for recollecting when this is to be done, and that is to be inspected, and when committees sit, and all that sort of thing, it is more than I can do. I've got lots of money now; and I am a single man, with no incumbrances—no wife—no children—no nothing—to provide for. Why shouldn't I retire on half pay? Here am I, with ten thousand pounds, and a tiara of diamonds and emeralds. I'll go up to town and keep open house in Portland Place. Hang me if I don't."

George Harroway and Anne Newsham were married in York Cathedral, on the 1st of February, 18—. The former was in his twenty-third year, and the latter had just seen her nineteenth. Harroway was a handsome man; but he was not a man of talent. He was far from a fool; but his intellect was certainly not above mediocrity. Anne was not handsome, but she was good looking; and in point of ability and ready wit, very few men had an advantage over her, while not one in a thousand of her own sex could be placed in competition.

In common with her sisters, Anne Newsham received "a good plain education," but she was not "accomplished." In point of general information on matters connected with the world, Anne was remarkably well stocked; and she could talk rationally and sensibly on any topic—no matter what it might be. Her knowledge of horses, dogs, and whatever appertained to sport, appeared to be instinctive. She had a kind and warm heart, but her light and off-handed remarks would have led many persons to suppose the contrary.

When Freeport arrived in town, he hired a cab to take him to the house of his elder brother in Belgrave Square, where he was well received, and closely interrogated as to the amount he had come in for. Rumour had set it down at 150,000*l.*; but, without going into particulars, Sam said it was "somewhere about ten thousand a-year." His family had always regarded Sam as a drain—as so much a year out of pocket; the reader therefore may conclude that his avowal of such affluent circumstances was listened to with considerable satisfaction.

Sam brought with him to London an order on Denison, Heywood,

Kenneth, & Co., for 9350*l.*, the balance of his account with the Yorkshire banker, and this amount was placed to a floating credit. There was no house vacant at the time in Portland Place; but Sam had set his heart upon that locality, and went into lodgings for a month or six weeks, when he was accommodated with a very desirable residence, lately occupied by a gentleman who was going abroad for the benefit of his health. Gillow furnished it in a remarkably neat manner; and Blew (whose discharge was purchased by Sam), was ordered to take care of everything, and see that nothing was spoilt.

Freeport was at one time very fond of driving, but he had Mrs. Miss-every's carriage and horses sent to London, and therefore he never appeared except in a heavy landau, and a handsomer turn-out was not to be met with in the Park. Before long Sam Freeport's house was an "*open*" one in all conscience. It was the rendezvous of nearly all the young officers about town. When Sam was there, he welcomed them heartily; when he was not, Blew did the needful. A dowager duchess with an immense jointure, or a very rich heiress, was constantly flitting before him; but somehow or other Freeport could never see a pretty face without falling violently in love with it, and no man ever suffered more from a multiplicity of affections. In less than four months Sam had proposed to seven ladies, and was accepted by every one; but, to use his own phrase, "a hitch about the settlements, or *something or other*," always stood in the way of his happiness, and, as far as matrimony was concerned, a fatality was hanging over him.

In all other matters Freeport had a run of luck which was almost too great for credence. Without the slightest idea of the *game* of whist, he would cut in at a table, and against the best play win almost every rubber, holding three or four honours every other deal. At races, he would back a horse against the field, because he fancied the name, and as sure as fate the animal he selected would win. If a picture, or anything else, were knocked down to him at an auction, somebody would offer him something for his bargain. He would take five at billiards from a man who was able to give him twenty, and win the game by a succession of crows. Even in the most trifling things he was the luckiest fellow living. If, by accident, he knocked the lightest of claret glasses off the table, it would be taken up unbroken. If, from an exuberance of animal spirits, he "bonneted" a man at a fair, no one ever seemed to see him do it, and somebody else was sure to get attacked by the party who found himself aggrieved. If he happened to get into a scrape, he had always at command some speech by which he was immediately exempt from the consequences of his transgression.

One night Sam went alone to the Surrey Theatre, and took a private box all to himself—on the second tier of boxes—that he might gaze on an actress without interruption or remark. In those days, the Surrey was lighted up with oil. The lamp immediately opposite to Freeport was as dull as an oil lamp could be, and fancying that it was "a patent screwing-up affair," Sam leant forward and began to screw away most vigorously. He screwed, and screwed, but without effect; and at length he capsize*d* the oil, which trickled down into the pit, and caused a fearful commotion amongst the respectable part of the community therein seated. Loud were the cries of "Shame! shame!" "What are you at, sir?" "Turn him out." "Blackguard!" "Where's the police?" When Freeport

saw the eyes of the nation, as it were, upon him, he laughed convulsively, which made him shake the lamp the more, and the oily shower was thereby increased. The manager of the Surrey very soon appeared, expostulated in extremely indignant terms, and requested to know who Sam was.

"Are you ignorant, sir, who I am?" inquired Sam.

"I am," said the manager.

"Then, sir, that circumstance alone," rejoined Sam, "induces me to look over the abrupt and uncourteous nature of your conduct and address. *I am the Solicitor-General, sir.* I came here to admire the acting for which this theatre is becoming famous; but the lights and the language are of a nature which certainly do not meet with my approval, and if the Lord Chamberlain does not take away your licence, it will not be for the want of representation."

The manager begged Sam not to be hasty, and said it was a mistake and a misunderstanding—that the house was going to be lighted with gas—that Miss Vincent was going to be engaged—that "THE WOOD DEMON" was soon coming out, and he hoped that the Solicitor-General would not take offence.

"Under these circumstances," said Sam, in the gravest manner possible, "of course the case is altered. No man has the drama more at heart than I have. I glory in the drama. I do, upon my honour. They may talk as they please about *suo sibi gladio*, but the drama is a nationality. Come to my chambers, in King's Bench Walk, to-morrow, and I may give you an idea or two on this subject which may be of use to you."

The manager bowed, said he felt highly gratified that the Solicitor-General was so kind, and that he would not fail to avail himself of so distinguished a compliment.

CHAPTER X.

GEORGE HARROWAY's mother was extremely disgusted at the idea of her son having married the daughter of a country attorney, and she endeavoured to suppress the "occurrence" in the *Times* and the *Chronicle*, and the paper published at Bath, where she resided. She had no notion, nor could she have been made to understand, that in the county where her son married, he, with his 6000*l.* a-year, was looked upon as a mere cypher, or nonentity, while Anne Newsham was the favourite of all the most important personages. The Earl of Lingfield had given up his house to the young couple for their honeymoon, and had gone to stay at Witley—and "confound the little minx for saying she would never marry to be an old man's nurse!"

Harroway asked his wife one morning to read the newspapers to him. This was a favourite employment of Anne's, and George loved to listen to her remarks. She took up the *Morning Post*, and found it full of Captain Freeport of the — Foot. It was "understood (so the editor probably heard from Sam's own lips) that Captain Freeport would stand for Middlesex."

It was "*not* true that Captain Freeport was one of the eight in the forthcoming match on the Thames. That gentleman proposed to leave London for Paris on the 24th instant."

"Stanhope Leicester, Esq., has been appointed a member of the committee for adjudging the prizes at the Smithfield Cattle Show, in the room of Captain Freeport, who will be absent from the metropolis when the show takes place."

"Anne, dear, you are inventing?" cried Harroway.

"Indeed, I am not, George," she replied. "And here he is again! *Bell's Life* informs us that the famous match at billiards, between Major Warde and Captain Freeport, and on which such heavy stakes were pending, was won by the latter officer, who in the last game scored 42, running, off the red ball."

"There's nothing else worth reading in this paper," said Anne. "Give me the *Chronicle*, George." After perusing it for a few minutes, she exclaimed, "Why, George, here's more of Freeport, and probably this accounts for his trip to Paris. 'We are given to understand that an action for breach of promise of marriage will shortly be tried in the court of Queen's Bench. The plaintiff is the widow of a deceased alderman, and the defendant a captain in the army, well known in the sporting world, and famous for his unbounded hospitality. Serjeant Wilde and Mr. Campbell are retained for the plaintiff. The Solicitor-General, Mr. Maule, Mr. Thesiger, and several other gentlemen whose names we have not heard, for the defendant.'"

The above was scarcely read, when the letter-bag was handed over to George. There was an epistle from Freeport himself. The seal was broken hastily.

"MY DEAR GEORGE—Now, don't laugh at what I am going to tell you, for it is a very serious business. I am up to my ears and eyes in a law suit, and am now off for Paris. If it goes against me, which it may, you know, I'm an exiled man for ever. The fact is this,—I proposed to an elderly lady, whom I first saw at my brother's house. The whole thing was a lark from beginning to end. I did it to satisfy my brother's wife that the old lady's grief for her late husband, who has only been dead three months, was all moonshine. However, I have engaged no end of lawyers, and if they don't bring me through, I'll never trust a lawyer again. I wish you could get Newsham to come up here and manage it; for these London fellows are so horribly dilatory, and seem to take no interest in a fellow's concerns. If I get clear of this, I'll never speak to a woman again, young or old. Tell your wife that this creature, who fancied I was in earnest, is as ugly as the old woman under the sofa. The misfortune is, that they all suppose I have ten thousand a-year, and if they go and give damages in proportion, I shall be left without a sixpence. Already have I paid away to these lawyer fellows 500*l.* in fees—only fancy, eh?"

"Tell Newsham he *must* come up to be my friend. He will find everything comfortable in my house, where I have left Blew in charge. Ask him if they can seize the furniture, &c. The tiara of diamonds and emeralds I've got with me. They'll not get that, I warrant 'em. I look on that tiara as a talisman of good luck which I'll never part with. With best love to your wife, believe me your affectionate friend in trouble at present,

"S. FREEPORT.

"P.S.—My address is Meurice's Hotel, Paris."

This letter was enclosed to Newsham, who was very fond of showing

his importance, and who wanted at that moment to go to London. He wrote to Sam for a power of attorney, which Sam very readily and gladly gave him, and thanked him at the same time for yielding to his entreaties.

Harroway and his wife were strolling round the grounds one clear cold evening. The former had his gun with him, to shoot a hawk which had made sad havoc amongst the earl's tumbler pigeons. The gun was on half cock, but by some accident it went off, and the whole contents of the barrel passed through the body of Anne's Scotch terrier, and killed him. The dog was a great favourite with every one—it was such a sharp and clever looking dog. Anne was sorely distressed at his fate; but the more distressed at what she thought was their bad luck. This feeling took so strong a hold of her, that the once bold Anne Newsham was now quite timid. She lost her nerve, even on horseback, and she feared to allow her husband out of her sight.

"It may be this *place* that is unlucky, George," she said. "Let us leave it, and go back to York."

Harroway yielded, and they returned to occupy a house he had rented equi-distant from Newsham's and the barracks. But the locality, it seemed, had nothing to do with their luck.

About two o'clock one morning—before they had been settled a week—the house was discovered to be on fire, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Harroway and his wife got down the staircase, which was in flames. They lost nearly everything that was of a perishable nature, but George only laughed at this, to dissipate the gloom which the accident cast over Anne's once bright face.

"What nonsense it is to cry over trifles," he would exclaim, "and talk about bad luck. These things happen to other people, and why should they not happen to us?"

Harroway obtained leave, and they went to spend a few days with an old bachelor, who lived a short distance from the city, until another abode was got ready for them.

On the estate was a small lake, and there was a small boat for the amusement of those who were fond of rowing. George induced Anne to get into the boat, and he rowed round the margin. When they returned, he discovered that he had lost a little plain gold ring, which his wife had placed on his finger the day they were married, requesting him at the time never to remove it without her permission. It was impossible to conceal the loss from her. She missed it, and asked what had become of it. Harroway told the truth, and Anne was miserable.

CHAPTER XI.

NEWSHAM arrived in London, and settled himself in Captain Freeport's mansion in Portland Place. Blew was all civility, and gave a very disparaging account of everybody on earth, except his master, who was (he said) a perfect gem of a man—without fault or blemish. Acting on the power of attorney, Newsham very soon took the case out of the London attorney's hands, and he wouldn't have anything to say to any of the counsel then employed, because none of them had ever gone the northern circuit, and consequently "didn't know what sharpness meant."

He admitted that the case was a very bad one, and that on "the

merits" Freeport stood no more chance than a cat without claws. "But," said Newsham, to himself, "if Billy Snuffles does not take a fatal legal objection before the case is closed, I'll eat my own head off."

The person spoken of as Billy Snuffles was the best black letter lawyer in England. He was a man of great talent, and had an immense practice; and no man ever had such luck in his profession. It was quite equal to his client's luck at cards or billiards. Newsham had first brought him into notice, and had been his constant friend for many years. Snuffles (he was never known by any other name) said Sam's letters to the lady were very strong and positive indeed, and he could not see how on earth they were to be "rebutted." "But, Newsham," said he, "a case is not lost till it is won, and in the course of our experience we have seen some queer things turn up."

"We have indeed," replied Newsham, "and I sincerely hope we shall do 'em in this. We must watch and hope; give 'em their tether, and let 'em go on."

The day of trial came on. The Attorney-General made a most brilliant speech, and earned his hundred guineas well. He represented his client as a lady of great personal charms and varied accomplishments, and the widow of a gentleman of rank. Freeport was described as "a most inhuman person"—as a "trifler with the feelings of innocence"—"a man revelling in wealth, and gloating over the impunity which it gives to the possessor."

Sam's letters were then read and commented upon, and they caused no little laughter from the bench, the bar, the jury, and the public—the expressions were so curious. As for Newsham, who knew Sam well, he could scarcely do his duty—he giggled so.

The awful time came for the defence. Snuffles looked at Newsham, and Newsham looked at Snuffles, who, by instinct, as it were, said to the bench, "My Lords, I think there is no case to go to the jury." He then turned over the leaves of his brief, on which he had taken notes, and suddenly muttered to himself, "I thought not."

"May it please your Lordships," said Snuffles, "there is no proof whatever of my client having refused to marry this lady; and if she's the delightful creature described by my learned friend, I doubt not he would marry her to-morrow."

Hereupon there was a terrible commotion amongst the wigged heads, and some chuckling on the part of Newsham. A fierce argument then took place, which resulted in the following judgment from the Lord Chief Justice:—"We are of opinion that the plaintiff must be *non-suited*. The letters of Captain Freeport are certainly evasive, and many persons would glean that he never intended to marry the plaintiff; or if he ever did so intend, he had changed his mind. At the same time, that is not sufficient for the Court. Proof of refusal is necessary; and proof of refusal we have none. The plaintiff asks the defendant when he intends to perform his promise. The defendant, in reply, says, 'My love, what do you say to joining a pleasure party to Margate?' The lady's solicitor then addresses the defendant, and the defendant tells him he is 'astonished at his impudence.' It would be monstrous to torture this into evidence of refusal. The plaintiff must be *non-suited*."

"Has the master won it, sir?" inquired Blew, quite pale with anxiety, when Newsham came out of court.

"Of course!" replied Newsham. "What do you suppose I came up from Yorkshire for?"

"Long life to you!" cried Blew. "Your equal is not to be met among any of these blackguards who have been pursuing of him. The captain himself must have thought it hopeless, or never would he have fled the kingdom. He's game to the back bone; though I must confess he was awfully cast down when they took him into court about the business."

Sam came back from Paris post haste, and embraced Newsham, whom he called his "deliverer."

"How did you manage it, Newsham, eh!" asked Sam.

"It was Lombard-street to a China orange," replied Newsham, out of breath from the violence of Sam's embrace.

"I wish the old girl was Lombard-street," said Sam. "We should have no more law suits, Newsham. I'm blowed if we should. Look here, Newsham. Have they made you comfortable, old boy? It was not the act of an insane person to send for *you*—was it? Look here. You said once you'd put a restraint on my actions. I wish to heaven you could put a restraint on everybody else's actions. By Jove, that Lord Denman looks as if he'd transport a man without remorse, and cast a poor devil in damages, just for a lark. What's the meaning of their wearing those big wigs? What about George? How does he get on? Have they had a fight yet, or do they continue to coo like turtle doves? It was a great mistake in Anne not marrying me. How rosy you look, old boy! One would fancy you had been to Paris, where everybody paints and makes themselves up. Look at me. I'm now a perfect mass of rouge, and *cosmetique*, and black, and pearl powder, and I don't know what all. I never saw such pockets as they've got to their billiard tables; not bigger than the top of that inkstand—just the size of the ball. I had not a chance. Lost every game. Luckily, I didn't bet. Let's have dinner, Newsham."

CHAPTER XII.

HARROWAY had been married three months, when one morning, after parade, he heard the major casually remark, "I am very sorry to hear that Mr. Glenworthy, the great banker, has destroyed himself."

"Indeed!" said some one else. "What's the meaning of that?"

"They say," replied the major, "that the bank must go; they have rather overdone the thing."

Harroway was interested in this bank—that is to say, he was a proprietor to the extent of one year's saving from his income; but so close was he respecting his private affairs, he did not join in the conversation, further than remarking, "Poor fellow! I am very sorry to hear it."

Instead of going home to his wife, George Harroway went to Newsham's. He found the old man absent and fidgety, and unusually incoherent in his replies, and what appeared very odd to Harroway, was that Newsham regarded the self-destruction of the best client he ever had as a mere matter of course.

"I hope there is no truth in the report that the bank is likely to break, for I should not like to lose that 4500*l.*," said George.

"Oh dear, no!" said Newsham. "Oh dear, no! quite safe—quite safe!"

The old man fixed his little sharp grey eye upon his son-in-law, and, after vacantly staring at him for at least a minute, burst into tears, and covered his face with his hands.

"What's the matter?" asked George.

"Oh God!" said Newsham, pressing his forehead, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, "this is worse than all!"

"What do you mean?" inquired Harroway.

"You will soon know. Too soon, I fear. I can never survive it."

"If you mean that the bank has gone, or is going," said Harroway, "you need not let that trouble you. Your interest is not greater than mine; and a loss twice as great might very easily be survived. It is a bore to lose money in this way; but it can't be helped. Those who venture should be prepared for kicks sometimes, as well as halfpence."

"God help you!" cried the old man. "Don't curse me!"

Newsham looked twenty years older in the space of an hour. He was a very young looking man for his age; but suddenly he seemed to break up, and become grey-headed. Harroway observed this wonderful change, and begged him to open his heart.

"Know the worst at once!" cried the old man. "The bank has gone—crash—I am ruined! And we all are ruined! And you are ruined!" He could say no more; his head fell upon his chest, and he seemed stupid with his own reflections.

Harroway was hurt for the old man's sake, but he did not understand how he himself could be ruined. The bulk of his property was "all safe in government funds." He roused the old man, and begged him to explain. But all he could elicit was this,—“They will take out judgment against the wealthiest.”

The phrase was unintelligible to the young man, and he proceeded to question further, but to no purpose.

Newsham became like a madman, and Harroway wrote a note to Anne, who was always looked up to in cases of difficulty, to come immediately. Anne came, and found her father quite childish. He laughed, and then wept, and then laughed again. She thought he had been drinking, and was surprised; for it was not Newsham's wont to indulge during the day.

"He says we are all ruined," said George.

The old man clutched a letter which he drew from his waistcoat pocket, and this letter Anne contrived to snatch from her father's hand. With eager eyes she read as follows:—"Newsham, these are the last lines my pen will ever write. I cannot live to see the awful wreck which is so close at hand, and the ruin of all those who are nearest and dearest to me—friends, relatives, and connexions. The fault is all mine. Poor dear Anne. Her husband's all, to go in this way! I am glad I never saw his face. Farewell Newsham."

"This is from Mr. Glenworthy," said Anne. "What can it mean?"

"He has destroyed himself," said George, "and your father says the bank has gone. I had only 4500*l.* there. How does he make out I lose my all?"

The old man smiled, and then shut his eyes.

Anne, who had often listened to discussions about the responsibility of parties, saw it at once, and she said in a solemn tone—"Then, George, *we are* ruined! All *is* gone! I felt this was impending!"

George Harroway turned deathly pale. He had an hereditary fondness for wealth, and knew the importance attached to it. Far from being purse-proud, he inwardly rejoiced in the knowledge that he was worth much money. To hear that it was all gone—to suspect only that it was in danger—was too fearful a blow to bear up against. He seated himself in a large chair, clutched the arms of it, and looked perfectly agast. His wife knelt before him, and begged him to listen to her—to act like a man—but he seemed deaf and dumb. His senses were apparently in complete abeyance. In vain did she say to him, “George, dear, *I* have been the cause of this misfortune; had it not been for me, you would never have risked your fortune thus, and lost it; but you are still young, George, and bright days may yet be in store for us. The loss of your riches ought not to diminish your happiness. So long as we have enough to live upon, we can fancy we have countless heaps of gold. Speak to me, George, and help me to give some consolation to my poor old father, who, at his age, will have to begin life anew in poverty. We shall be better off than many of our neighbours, for we do not stand alone in this calamity. The man who has destroyed himself has left behind him a wife and thirteen children, who never knew what it was to have whim or wish ungratified. George, do not stare so unmeaningly.”

This last sentence caught Harroway’s ear, and he replied, “Anne, dear, you told me once you had a horror of poverty. Well do I remember that.”

“True!” she cried, clutching his arm, and looking into his eyes to rivet the attention she had aroused. “True, George. But then I thought it was far off. Now that it is near, George, I can laugh at its horrors. For me it has no horrors. As the inhabitant of a wretched hovel with you, I could be as happy as though the walls of a palace surrounded us. Whatever be our fate, let us battle with it, George, dear.”

“Good girl!” said old Newsham, proudly, moved by her firm voice and the courage she showed—“brave girl! You are worth a thousand fortunes—even such as mine, which was twice as great as his, though nobody knew it but myself and that poor man who is now no more.”

Harroway was equally struck with the courage of his wife, and embracing her, he called on God to spare her unto him so long as he should live.

Sam Freeport carried on faster than ever, after his return from Paris. He sent for a French cook, whose dishes were the admiration of the best qualified judges. Of his wines there never was any other opinion than that they were unexceptionable.

But Freeport became tired of hearing himself called “that excellent fellow, Sam.” The life palled on him, and at length he preferred the conversation with Blew about old times, to that of any of his numerous visitors.

“It’s a great bore, Blew, to be a man of fortune,” said Sam one morning. “I don’t feel half so happy as when I had not a sixpence, and had to tax my wits how to raise the wind for current expenses. If the old regiment was not ordered out to Bangalore, or some such place or other in the East, I think I’d try and get back.”

“How would you manage with the colonel, sir?”

“Oh! as for that, I could soon manage. I could get the servant maid to say I saved the child’s life, by preventing a mad dog from attacking her—and they’d yearn towards me instantan’ly.”

"London is not a very nice place, after all, sir," suggested Blew. "I think you would like Belfast much better, sir."

"Not a bit of it," rejoined Sam. "It is not the place. One is just the same to me as another. It is the regiment, Blew. It is the mess—wherever that is, that's the place for me. I was—let me see—16 from—27—that's eleven years with the regiment, and no man was ever so much loved in it. If I can manage it, Blew, I'll go back. What do you say, will you take to pipeclay again, eh?"

"Wherever you go, I'll follow, sir. But I'll never 'list again, sir. If the regiment is going to Bangylower, sir, you'd better change your mind, and get into the regiment that's at Belfast. You'd be delighted with Belfast, sir. The Belfast ladies is the beautifullest ladies in the whole world, sir, with their dark blue eyes, and their nut brown hair, and their ivory teeth, and their little mouths."

"Don't go on any more about them," said Sam, "or you'll make me break my vow, never to have anything to say to them again. Besides, the ladies are very handsome in the Indies, or else the pictures of 'em don't speak the truth."

"Well, sir, it don't signify to me. Wherever you go, there will your faithful servant Blew be in attendance. I'm so used to the irregular life you have led me for the last nine years, that any other life would be the death of me."

Freeport was a man who never pondered. When an idea came into his head, he carried it out at once. Blew was therefore requested to call in the bills—to let the house for the remainder of the term—and put everything in train for a start to any part of the world, on a day's notice.

Sam had been seven months in town, and in that time had parted with more than half of his money; and it was doubtful whether the residue would cover his outstanding debts. He had no Horse Guards interest himself; but his brother knew several persons who had, and they were always glad to exert it whenever called upon to do so.

Sam paid his elder brother a visit one morning—the first since the trial, and was about to unbosom himself, and tell the whole truth, when his brother, with a solemn face remarked, that it was "a bad look out for poor young Harroway?"

"What's the matter?" asked Sam. "Has Anne bolted, or what? She was a rum girl, and I'm quite satisfied she never loved *him*." Here he looked at himself in the glass.

"No, poor fellow!" said Sam's elder brother. "He has not only lost everything, but he is hunted to death by bailiffs."

"Nonsense!" ejaculated Sam. "How's that? George was beastly rich, and a most careful fellow, too."

"He lost it by the failure of a Joint Stock Bank. One of your imperial affairs, Sam."

"Not the Bank that Newsham is concerned in?"

"The same!"

"Has it broke?" inquired Sam, with well feigned anxiety.

"Yes. Didn't you see it in the papers?"

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Sam,—reeling towards the couch—"then I'm a ruined man!"

"I hope you had nothing in it, Sam?"

"Yes—yes. Everything was there deposited at interest. Oh

Edward! this is an awful business. You have turned me deadly faint. Let me have a glass of Madeira. Is there no remedy against a bank that breaks?"

Sam's brother's heart palpitated fiercely when he heard this; but as Sam seemed so dreadfully cut up, he thought it as well to console him by saying he would not lose all, and that eventually it would be recovered from the proprietors.

"Eventually!" whined Sam. "That's all very well, but what am I to do in the mean time? starve, or what? Can I live upon my half pay?"

"No, Sam, you need not starve. You can very easily get upon full pay again, and until the first instalment is paid you from the bank proprietors, Robert and myself will make you some allowance, which you can refund."

"It's an awful business!" murmured Sam, burying his head in the sofa pillows. "But thank Heaven it is no worse! Poor George Harroway! I pity him from the very bottom of my heart!"

CHAPTER XIII.

HARROWAY quietly gave up all that he had, as soon as he found it would be taken away from him by legal process. An estate which was left to his mother for life had been settled upon Anne. It was situated near the New Forest, and though it was very extensive, it was not very profitable. His mother had some five or six hundred a year besides; but then she was in debt, and in absolute want of ready money;—so much so, that she had been compelled to rent the estate and reside in Bath.

Harroway, for months, lived in constant dread of being arrested and taken to prison to satisfy some of the *new* creditors who were springing up in all directions and parts of the kingdom. Newsham's household property was sold off, and the old man went for a season to York Castle. Every one that Newsham had any influence over,—and their name was legion—was in the same condition as himself—penniless—and beggared. Mrs. Newsham and her three unmarried daughters went to Liverpool.

"Really, George, dear," said Anne, one night (as she sat mending George's socks, over a tallow candle), "we are not so badly off, after all. Poverty is not half so bad as I took it to be—as far as I can see, it only teaches us what we can do without—for my part, I am quite as happy in this merino dress as I should be in the most expensive velvet—and although this light is not so bright as it might be," (she snuffed it as she spoke,) "yet it brings us much nearer together, for we have both to get near to it—you to read and I to sew. It was a kind act of my old god-father to buy our books and give them to us—for we seem to read them with twice the pleasure. George, I bought you some cigars to-day—for it is a curious thing, whenever you smoke I never have the toothache. I dare say you will think this very selfish in me; but really, George, if you knew what I suffered from my teeth, you would forgive me. You will find them on the sideboard yonder, dearest. I wish you would begin, for I felt a twinge just now."

Harroway was quick enough to see that Anne's reason for buying cigars was not dictated by selfishness. But he would not dispel the pleasure he could see she felt in practising this innocent deception, and

he readily complied with her wishes. As he lighted the cigar with a coal, which he took up with the tongs, a tear glistened in each eye—a tear of gratitude to fate, which, while it robbed him of all his worldly goods, had given him an equivalent in a woman whom he could love, honour, and respect.

"There's one thing, George," continued Anne, "which annoys me beyond description; and I shall not be sorry when the day arrives for us to leave England for another country, where no one will know anything about us. What I allude to is being regarded with pity by so many people. I detest being pitied; it makes my blood boil with rage. I remember one day rushing an old horse at a bank which was too much for him; and the beast came down, and gave me the most flying purl I ever had in my life. I sprained my ankle very severely, and hurt my left hand; but the pain was nothing like so bad as what I felt on hearing some person say, *Poor thing!* There's something so dreadfully humiliating in being called 'Poor thing,' or 'Poor creature.' I would much rather have a slap in the face. I think, if I was a man, I would strike any person who pitied me. '*Poor Mrs. Harroway!*'" she imitated a lady of their acquaintance. "Only fancy that coming from a woman who has a disgusting dwarf for a husband, whom I would not be united to for fifty thousand a-year—an ill-nurtured, peevish, jealous, unpopular creature—much more like a ragged, knock-knee'd pony than a man. '*Poor Mrs. Harroway!*'"

"Hark, dear!" cried Harroway, half frightened. "There's some one below. Listen! he said '*Where is he?*' I hope they will never separate us."

"That they shall *never* do, George," said Anne. "We will go together."

There was a knock at the door.

Anne called out in a firm voice, "Come in;" and she drew herself up to face whoever it might be.

The door was partially opened, and a head appeared, whence issued, in a deep bass voice,

"I know a bank whereon the wild thyme grows."

"Come in, Sam," cried Harroway—(and Anne laughed heartily). "What has brought you down here?"

"Fate, sir, Fate," was the reply. "Well, sister Anne, I am glad to see you looking cozy and comfortable over a mutton fat. How are you? What is it the poet says—contentment—joy—and something or other, eh? Well, never mind. It will be all the same in less than a hundred years."

Here Freeport slapped George on the back, and inquired what they had had for dinner.

"Roast mutton," said Anne; "and we are going to have it cold to-morrow, and hashed the day after."

"No you are not," said Sam. "I want to see it now. I am cruel hungry. Have you any pickles?"

"Yes," said Anne, "and George still drinks gin and water."

"Then we shall have a happy repast," said Sam; "and over it I will tell you all about myself. Blew is outside—he'll get everything ready, if your servants are out of the way. Don't get up, sister Anne. My man knows where everything is kept by instinct."

"We lock everything up now, Sam," said George. "I'll go and get it out for you."

While Freeport was discussing the cold mutton and pickles, he gave the Harroways to understand that in a few days he would be gazetted to the old corps—that he had spent all his money, and had done his brothers most beautifully. He declared that the happiest moments he had spent since they parted were the present; and the joyous expression of his countenance was sufficient to satisfy them he spoke the truth. Sam voted an idle life a great nuisance, a sentiment which amused Harroway vastly. He intended, he said, to call on the colonel, and not take the slightest notice that they had ever had any differences. "In short," said Sam, "I'll write and ask him for a room in his house."

When Anne saw her husband's face overspread with laughter,—when she heard him break out occasionally into a roar, at the narration, by Sam, of scenes that he had taken a part in, she was delighted that he had paid them a visit; and when Freeport praised her father's ability, and said—"Mark my words, if Newsham don't turn all this business to a good account, and before five years pass away, accumulate no end of a fortune,"—she was truly enchanted. These last observations seemed to inspire Harroway with hopes, and he took another glass of grog on the strength of them.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANNE retired, but Sam kept his friend up the whole night long. From the next room Anne could hear them screaming with laughter. She lay awake, listening to the noise, which was like the sweetest music to her ears.

The following morning, while Harroway and his wife, and Freeport, were at breakfast, Blew came into the room, and said to his master, "There's an ill-looking thief, sir—I beg your pardon, ma'm, for using the expression (he looked at Anne)—prowlin' about the premises, with B-A-Y-L-E-A-F marked on his ugly countenance."

"With what, Blew?"

"Bailiff, sir—I'd take an oath of it."

"What makes you think that?" asked Sam.

"Why, sir, he's got one of those netted comforters on his neck, and he's got one of those thick fustian shootin' coats. But, however, sir, I'd swear he was a bailiff, if it was only by his high-lows—they are laced nattily up the front, with leather strings, sir."

"Look here, Blew!" said Sam, handing him a large carving fork—"just mount guard at the door, and see that he does not come in here for the next quarter of an hour."

"Faith, I'll not let him in for the next twelvemonth, if it comes to that," said Blew, who left the room, and seated himself on the top stair, where he hummed—

"O say, thou dear possessor of my breast!
Where's now my boasted liberty and rest?
Where those gay moments which I once have known
And where that heart I fondly thought my own?"

"From place to place I solitary roam,
Abroad uneasy, nor content at home,
I scorn the beauties other eyes adore—
The more I view them, think thine own the more."

When Blew left the room, Harroway put down his knife and fork, looked up at the ceiling, and groaned heavily.

"What's the meaning of that?" asked Sam. "Surely, you don't funk a bailiff? Lord, man, they're nothing, when you are used to 'em."

"Mr. Harroway does not funk a bailiff, or anything else, Captain Freeport," said Anne, taking up Sam rather too sharply, considering she was his hostess. "But you'll recollect, Captain Freeport, that Mr. Harroway is a married man, and not quite so selfish as the rest of the world. He knows that to be taken away from this would annoy me, and therefore the chance of it annoys him."

"Well, if he doesn't funk, why should he make that disagreeable, dismal noise?"

Harroway saw the blood rushing into his wife's cheeks—the veins in the neck swelling—and the eyelids moving quickly, preparatory to an outbreak; and he placed his hand gently on her arm, and said, "Anne, dearest, don't dispute. Sam is quite right. I *do* funk these fellows. They worry my soul out."

"And you shall laugh at 'em, old George," said Sam, tapping him significantly on the shoulder, and winking his left eye. "Listen to me, Mrs. Harroway, and you are all right."

When the colour was receding from Anne's cheeks, and gradually diffusing itself—when she was changing from anger to gratitude—when she saw that Freeport knew George's failing as well as herself, and that his object was to cheer and aid him—her face was perfectly beautiful—the eyes were heavenly.

"Look here," continued Sam, "you don't know that fellow Blew, Mrs. Harroway. He is one of the most invaluable men that ever served his country or a master. I'll be bound to say that that man will know before to-morrow morning what officer in the corps has the best shirts and pocket-handkerchiefs, and I shall never be at a loss for a respectable get-up in that particular. I leave everything to Blew. He's worth 200*l.* a year to me."

One recollection flashed across George's mind; and notwithstanding he *did* funk the bailiff, he fell back in his chair and laughed hysterically, and his wife did the like at the bare idea that a man could be so consummately cool, and have the face to confess it.

"Irish linen—Scotch cambric—book muslin—such an assortment, eh, George?"

"Sam! Sam! Do leave off, or you'll be the death of me," laughed George.

"It's all right," responded Freeport. "Blew would never let the fellow in without orders. You know, he'd poke his eye out with that fork just as soon as look at him. Now, then, look here. Not one minute before Blew came in, I had made up my mind to go to the mess, after breakfast, and get two bottles of our old Madeira, and take them down to the castle, and spend the day with Newsham—talk about the beastly past and a better future, and cheer the old man's heart up."

Poor Anne burst into tears. The kindly feeling that accompanied Sam's words was too much for her.

"Come! come!" cried Sam—"none of this. I don't funk bailiffs, or anything of that sort; but, by Jove! to see a woman like you shed tears turns me regularly topsy-turvy."

Sam's large blue eyes distilled several drops; but he ate a radish savagely, and looked at his plate, so that they were unseen by those who sat at table with him.

After a brief pause, Sam began again: "Look here, George, you and sister Anne had better leave this to-night, at about eight o'clock. Post over to Wakefield, and go on to Barnsly; there rest a day, and then take the coach up to London. The colonel will give you leave, for he never denied any man a reasonable request in his life. The regiment leaves England in two months, and you can live quietly in ambush till then. At about twelve o'clock, I will put on your blue frock coat, and go out. As soon as I see the bailiff, I'll pretend to elude his grasp. He'll walk along side of me for a minute or so, and when I look at him, he'll say, 'Mr. Harroway, I wish to speak with you.' I'll mend my pace, and try to wind him. He'll then *touch* me, George. I know these fellows so well, you know. When he touches me, I'll stop. Then he'll show the writ, and then I'll offer him a couple of sovereigns. That will insult him; for no bailiff will take a tip lower than ten pound. After some parley, I'll do the civil, and crave for a parting with my wife. He'll grant this, in hopes of a glass of grog. When I return you must pretend, sister Anne, to weep and be dreadfully downcast, and I'll make a speech like the dying confession of a man going to be hanged. When I am gone, let that be a signal for you two to be off, as soon as you can get ready; but I'll write you a letter when I am safely caged. Recollect, that in this corps we are all brothers and sisters. We are the only family in the world that does not quarrel; and the reason is, we never give each other cause to.—Do we, George?"

"No, Sam, I am happy to say we never do. Your difference with the colonel is the only one I can remember; and I hope, and verily believe *that* even will blow over."

"Blow over!" echoed Freeport. "Blow over! I'd bet you ten thousand a year ——"

The door opened, and a portly gentleman entered. Blew, with the fork in his hand, and his eye on his master, closed it after him.

It was the colonel. He walked up to Freeport and shook him by the hand. "I knew you were here," said the colonel, "when I saw that rascal Blew sitting on the stairs picking his teeth with a carving fork. I am told you are to rejoin us; and believe me, my dear Sam, when I say I am very happy to hear it."

"I was this moment, sir, about to pay my respects to yourself and Mrs. Sneed; but circumstances of what they call 'an untoward' or 'an unfroward' nature—which this boy Harroway can explain—will, I fear, debar me that pleasure for some days to come. Meanwhile, you will oblige me by conveying to Mrs. Sneed my kindest remembrances and regards. I shall not be gazetted, sir, till the 13th or 14th of next month."

CHAPTER XV.

SAM was accosted by the bailiff, and eventually arrested; but the offer of a bribe of two sovereigns was so great an insult that Freeport was not allowed "the tender parting" he anticipated. He was taken to the Castle forthwith, and the heavy doors closed upon him. Sam expected to find Newsham dreadfully cast down and dejected; but, to his surprise, he found the old man hard at work, giving instructions to his head clerk.

"Well, old boy," said Sam, as soon as he was in Newsham's presence, "who'd have thought of ever meeting with *you* in a cage? I fancied you were much too knowing a bird to get caught, eh, Newsham?"

"What, my dear friend, Freeport!" exclaimed the old man. "I am very glad to see you. This is the place, Freeport, to test the sincerity of friendship; and when I get out again, I shall be wiser than I have been. It was very kind of you to come and see me. Sit down."

"Not a bit kind," replied Sam. "I was brought here; arrested, sir, in York, for 2500*l*."

"Are you serious?"

"I am," whispered Sam in the old man's ear. "The bailiff took me for George; they are going to start away for London to-night. When they get there, I suppose I can easily get out of this?"

"Of course you can, and have a splendid action of trespass against the sheriff into the bargain. Capital! capital! How were they? Does my girl still keep her spirits up?"

"Doesn't she!" cried Sam. "She's much the best man of the two. George's spirits departed with his gold!"

"It was an awful blow," said the old man, jauntily. "Just see how grey it has made me. But we must make the best of it."

"Of course," ejaculated Sam. "It's a folly to talk of life's troubles. There's always two sides of the way. I told 'em you would turn it to account; and I know you will—wont you, old fellow?"

Newsham smiled, and remarked, "If I don't, depend upon it no one else can. We shall see. Why, within the last three days," whispered Newsham, confidentially, "I have shifted some 250,000*l*. worth of responsibility from the shoulders of other people to my own; and the certificate will rub off all that along with the rest. By the bye, Freeport, all Mrs. Missevery's property, which was left to you, went with that of others."

"What a lucky fellow I am," said Sam. "For if I had got it, I should have left it to you to manage, and it would have been lost. Now that just establishes my theory—namely, that a man like me has no business with more than he absolutely wants. I don't mean to say I should have cried about it; but I might, Newsham, you know, and made myself unhappy; but as I never had it, why, of course, I have no cause for lamentation. I gave it out, however, that I was deeply involved; and when I write to my brother from 'York Castle,' I shall certainly get something for present expenses—as a sort of consolation. What a rascally world this is, to be sure, Newsham, eh? Swindling ought to be made legal in this age."

"No, no, my good sir," said the old man, "you must not destroy the

fabric of business. The laws are all very well as they stand. 'They require no sort of alteration. To try and mend the law, is to make it worse.'

"Well, I suppose you know best," said Sam. "Let us have a glass of Madeira, and then I'll go and stroll round the place, and let you go on with your work. At what hour do you dine?"

"At the usual hour," said Newsham. "One or two people, who expect future favours, are very attentive and supply my wants. You will find lots of good company here, taking the air and exercise, and the greater part of them abuse me. It is very natural they should; but still it ought to teach us a lesson never to advise men what to do with their money. If they are fortunate, you are the wisest and best creature in the world; if they are *unfortunate*, then you are the greatest rascal that ever breathed, even if you lose as much as the whole of them put together."

True enough, there was an abundance of company in the castle. Men of all ages and ranks, and they all seemed to know each other. Sam was a stranger in the crowd, but he did not long remain so. A very old man, who stood about six feet two inches high, and whose thick hair was as white as the driven snow, approached him, and bowed in the most graceful and dignified manner imaginable.

"Have you ever been in a jail before?" inquired the old man, with a pleasing inquisitiveness.

"Never, but I have often been devilish near it," returned Sam, in his own peculiar quaint way.

The old man smiled, and said, "I am glad to see your troubles do not sit heavily on your head, sir."

"I have not a trouble in the world," said Sam. "What's the use of having troubles when they can be so easily removed by people themselves?"

"That's the spirit of philosophy, sir," said the old man, "and I wish I could impart it to these poor folks around. See what dejection is everywhere visible! The only joy they have is when the door opens to admit a companion in distress. Yonder stands a man, with his eyes upon the ground, whom I have known for the last twenty years. He was a very opulent corn factor. When I spoke to him yesterday, he didn't recollect me. That poor youth, with his hands in his empty pockets, is the son of a man who died immensely rich. He represents one of the oldest families in the riding. The boy inherited his father's gambling propensities, and has lost everything. His heart seems broken."

"He could not have had any to break," observed Sam. "A stout, burly-looking fellow like that taking on about losing money! He ought to be ashamed of himself. I pity women and children who suffer, but I don't pity the speculators at all."

"The man in the white top-coat, leaning against the wall, is a great ironmonger," continued the old man. "His losses have driven him to drink, and from the expression of his face, I should say he was drunk now. His course, I fear, will be pursued by many."

"I am glad to say," said Sam, "I had nothing to do with it. I am here as a security."

"I have been an inmate of these walls for the last four years," said the old man, "and I shall probably never get out of them. I was a defaulter in my accounts, though I never knew what became of the deficiency."

CHAPTER XVI.

AWAY from his friends in the regiment, and domiciled in obscure lodgings in the Edgeware Road, George Harroway began to mope. He would look out upon the street, and stare for an hour together, without speaking a word. Anne used to talk incessantly, but her wit and vivacity began to lose their effect. He could not help laughing at her remarks; but his face would relapse, almost immediately, into that gloomy expression which seemed to have there settled itself. Whenever they went out to walk, Anne led him wherever she listed. "It is all the same to me," was his constant reply to her questions.

One Sunday evening, they strolled towards the Serpentine. Harroway cast his eyes upon the water and sighed. A tremor ran through his wife's every vein, and a thousand horrible thoughts crowded upon her. She employed all her art to get him to take a part in a conversation; but notwithstanding that he said "Yes" and "No" occasionally, it was very evident he was not listening to what she said.

When they returned, Anne had the misfortune to break a small looking-glass. Her heart sunk within her when she beheld the fragments on the floor. There is an old superstition in Yorkshire that whoever breaks a looking-glass will be unlucky for seven years. But she rallied, and went down to dinner with a face beaming with smiles. Their means were very limited, for the paymaster was the only person they could rely upon; nevertheless, George Harroway insisted on sending to a neighbouring public house for a dozen of port wine, and, for the first time since he had been married, he got very drunk indeed. Anne thought little of this; but lo! the next morning, immediately after breakfast, he opened, with his own hand, another bottle, and took a draught out of a tumbler. His wife remonstrated, and Harroway begged of her to "mind her own business." Before five o'clock in the evening he was again intoxicated, and talked like a madman. He accused Anne of being the cause of all his misfortunes, in consequence of her reckless extravagance and passion for gambling—her vanity in supposing she knew anything about horses, and letting him in for 10,000*l.* on the last Derby. The poor girl had never betted in her life, beyond a pair of gloves or a new bonnet, but still she admitted the truth of all he declared, and kneeling beside him, as he lay upon the couch, she implored his pardon for all her past imprudence, and promised to behave better in future. This unqualified confession of error soothed the excited mind of Harroway, and ere long he fell asleep, and breathed the laboured breath of heavy intoxication.

Anne sat beside him, stitching her fingers off, and stifling her sighs lest they should, by chance, disturb him.

At about eight o'clock there was a postman's rap at the door, which awoke George Harroway, and startled his wife. The former stared around the room in astonishment. Poor fellow, he had been dreaming of other circumstances than those which oppressed him. While his wife broke the seal of the letter, which was to her address, George turned round and was about to compose himself once more to slumber.

"George, George, dear!" she exclaimed. "Here is some luck at last. Somebody has sent us a bank-note for 50*l.*"

"I'd bet it is a bad one. One of those d——d imperial affairs!" he grunted.

"No, dear George. Look at it. I wonder who it can be! Not a word, and the hand-writing of the address I never saw before. We shall go on swimmingly now, George."

"Of course, we'll make a fortune!" observed Harroway.

"We'll not do that, dear George," said Anne, good temperedly; "but we can take a trip to Calais, George, and enjoy ourselves until the regiment embarks. George! don't go to sleep again. Sit up and talk."

"I'm not going to sleep, dear," said Harroway, pettishly, and in another minute he was snoring loudly.

Anne sat working till twelve o'clock, then, collecting her thoughts, as well as she could, she tried to form *a future*.

To her intense horror, Harroway awoke, and craved for some brandy and water. She gave it, with feigned cheerfulness, but the bottle had nearly fallen from her hand.

Day after day was spent in idleness and dissipation by Harroway, and in pain and anxiety by his wife. It was necessary for her to cash the 50*l.* note, to meet some little bills, which demanded urgent settlement. She went to her dressing-case, where the note was placed, and to her dismay it was not to be found. She searched her drawers, her work-basket, and every place where it might have been deposited for safety (although she was certain she put it in the dressing-case), but it was not to be found. Doubtless it had been stolen. Since the great calamity Anne had never alluded to their bad luck, but the words were constantly on Harroway's lips. Anne, therefore, did not like to tell him of their loss. She tested her ingenuity to know how the sum could be replaced. There was but one way—the sale of her watch, and a variety of trinkets which she never wore, and which he was not likely to miss.

The landlady effected this little matter, and disposed of the property at a moderate sacrifice of value.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM York Castle, Sam Freeport wrote the following letter to his friend Harroway:

"MY DEAR GEORGE—I am so very happy here with Newsham, that I should like to remain for a month longer; but the time is nearly up, and I must prove to the sheriff, that I am not you but myself, and by these means get out. A more decent set of people I have never met, and I feel under some obligations to you, old boy, for giving me an opportunity of making their acquaintance. There is no fear of being bitten by mad dogs here—no fear of being run over by carriages; 'pon my word, George, it is a most desirable residence for any man of retired habits, and to an antiquary it ought to be a luxury. Here's Julia Cæsar, and the Clifford Tower, and it is impossible to say what all. The living is unexceptionable. Newsham has no end of friends, who are very bountiful. Blew brings down the mess Madeira; but as Newsham says



CAPTAIN FREEPORT IN YORK CASTLE.

the sheriff is responsible for putting me here instead of you, I think I shall call upon him to pay for it. Old Newsham is making no end of money. I say, George, what a jolly thing a profession is, if a fellow happens to be clapt in jail. Bobby Tort is to come down here to see me to-morrow for a few minutes; but I will make him stop all day, and no doubt he will get well rowed when he goes home. I owe you 7*l.* for a bill you paid at the White Horse on my account. That elder brother of mine is a regular brick. Believe me, my dear George, with kind regards to sister Anne, your loving SAM."

When George Harroway received this letter, he was in an extremely bad humour, in consequence of some imaginary impertinence shown to them by the landlady, who was (Harroway said) attempting to presume upon their poverty, and give herself airs. He read the letter, sneered, and muttered, "Sam Freeport is an unmeaning, flippant fool."

"Don't abuse poor Freeport," cried Anne. "Really, George, I think he is the most kind-hearted creature breathing."

"Do you? Just read that," said her husband, and he tossed the letter to her; and rising from the table, paced the room in anger.

"My beloved George!" cried Anne; "you must have misunderstood Freeport. It is impossible to conceive a more kind letter. Read it again, dearest."

"I have read it once, and that is enough," responded Harroway. "I bear misfortunes as well as most men; but I will not allow Freeport or any one else to twit me about my circumstances."

"Surely he never intended to do so, George."

"Well, Anne, if you like to take his part to my prejudice, there is an end of it; but I know Freeport better than you do, and I say he did. I never paid 7*l.* for Freeport to the White Horse man, and what does he mean by sending it? Why, to insult me, to show you how poor I am, because you refused him, and married me. I can see through his motives."

Harroway was a great deal too much excited to admit of being reasoned with, and Anne pretended to agree with him, and denounce Freeport; but before she went to bed, she got hold of George's pocket-book, where Sam's York account was kept, and sure enough, there it was written, "paid Sam's bill at the White Horse, 7*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*"

The next morning, when this was triumphantly shown to Harroway, he positively denied ever having said one syllable against Sam, whom he declared to be the best fellow that ever broke bread.

Poor Anne fancied that her husband's reason was deserting him, and in the thought she almost lost her own. He took it into his head to be jealous of Sam Freeport, and scowled at his wife whenever the name was mentioned, or the man himself alluded to.

There was another matter which excited Harroway. He was excessively proud of Anne's personal appearance, and observing that her walking dress was getting somewhat shabby, he proposed that she should get another.

"I tell you what it is, Anne," said he; "if you can't come out in a good dress and clean kid gloves, I will not be seen with you; and if you have not got the money just now, why, pawn your watch, which is of no use to you."

Anne had longed for an opportunity to reveal the secret which tormented her, and now that opportunity appeared, she determined not to lose it, and told the whole truth. Harroway became furious—not because the 50*l.* note had been stolen—not because she had sold the watch—but because, he said, she had deceived him. “How can I place confidence in a woman who acts in that way?” he vociferated. “A man may tell his wife as many falsehoods as he may deem it expedient; but for a woman to deceive her husband—oh! Anne, Anne, I could not have believed you guilty of such a thing!”

She could have shed a flood of tears at the reflection and this reproach: but she repressed them, and argued the point with great dignity and tact.

Amidst all these miseries, Anne sat down and wrote cheerful letters to her family and friends—letters which spoke of her happiness that her dear husband bore up so well against his severe misfortunes, and made her contented with the lot which it had pleased Providence to assign them. Her honest heart accused her of falsehood; but she felt convinced that the goodness of her motive would, before any tribunal, extenuate, if not absolutely pardon the offence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE day came when Harroway and his wife were to embark with a detachment of the regiment for Madras. The detachment was under the command of Freeport, a circumstance which annoyed Sam beyond measure, for he hated responsibility of any kind. There was now a marked difference in George Harroway's manners. He became captious and argumentative. If his friends did not pay attention to everything he said, he would say to himself, “Ah, I am a poor devil now, and am slighted, of course.” If, on the other hand, they made more of him than formerly (as was the case), he would feel his altered circumstances the more keenly, and become repugnant, and frequently offensive in his remarks.

“May I read to you, George?” Anne would sometimes ask.

“If you like—but I don't care about it,” he would reply; and in the middle of a passage which she imagined would particularly interest him, he would begin to whistle “Isle of beauty, fare thee well!”

Wretched as was Anne, she still kept up those bright looks which she wore in days when her heart was light and happy. Nothing seemed to daunt her. In stormy weather, or in calm weather—when the wind was fair or foul—she was always the same good tempered, lively looking Mrs. Harroway, ready to do a kindness for any one, or raise a laugh amongst others, though her own breast ached with its sadness. Sam Freeport could not imagine she was unhappy, and the more he looked at her the more he liked her; and he looked at her so often that, for the third time in his life he fell in love with her, and could think of nothing but Anne from morning till night.

Harroway, one day at table, observed Sam's tender looks. He kept his eye closely on his wife, to see if she returned them, or gave him any encouragement. She did not, but Sam still gazed on. After dinner they repaired to the deck, and Freeport, as usual, asked Anne to walk

with him. She took his arm, and they paced the deck together—Sam saying all sorts of pretty things, and Anne reasoning with him on their absurdity; but in so pretty a manner that he could not be offended though he was hurt. George watched them, and his soul seemed all on fire. The loss of his property was for the time forgotten, in the insult which he conceived was offered to his honour. Formerly he would have laughed at the scene before him; but now it almost drove him to madness. In order to conceal his rage from the eyes of others he retired to his cabin. On entering it he saw the brandy-bottle on the swinging-tray, and to give a zest to the anathemas of which he delivered himself, he took a large portion, and very slightly diluted it.

Anne observed George leave the deck, and as soon as she possibly could, without appearing rude to Freeport, she followed him. He was stretched on his couch, with his eyes closed. She placed her hand upon his feverish forehead, which he removed, coldly and contemptuously. She inquired if he were ill. He replied, "Begone, I hate you!"

"Why do you hate me?" she asked, in an under tone, lest the servants in the cuddy should hear her.

"You know the cause," he murmured.

"Indeed, I do not know that you have any cause to hate me, George," she cried. "You may be sorry that you ever saw me; but I have been a good wife to you, and as long as I live I will never be otherwise."

"It is false, Anne!"

"It is not, George!"

"You have given Freeport encouragement to pay you more attention than it is proper you should receive, and I'll be revenged. Freeport shall answer for it."

"I'll swear to you, George——"

"I would not believe you, if you were to swear till to-morrow morning," he interrupted her; and rising from the couch he was about to leave the cabin, but Anne turned the key quickly, and stood before the door.

"Let me out this moment!" cried Harroway, the opposition inflaming the excitement already caused by the ardent spirit.

"Never," she exclaimed, "till you can behave as a reasonable man."

"I am determined!"

"You shall not."

He seized her by the arm. She leaned back more firmly against the door, looked him steadily in the face, and begged him not to make a noise and a fool of himself at the same time. He loosed his hold, and resuming his seat upon the couch, he burst into tears. His wife had scarcely seated herself beside him, when Freeport rapped at the cabin door, and called out, "George, come on deck and smoke a cheroot. Here's a sail in sight—a homeward-bound—and we shall speak her in an hour!"

"George is asleep," cried Anne; and in order to convince Sam she had spoken the truth, she called out, "George, dear, awake! There is a sail in sight. Thank you, Captain Freeport; we will be on deck presently."

In a very short time Harroway became composed and rational. He craved forgiveness, which was granted; and putting on his cloak, he

proceeded with Anne to the deck. They sat upon one of the hencoops, and watched the vessel, impelled by the strong trade wind, bounding towards her home, and seeming to exult in her speed.

With the exception of Mrs. Harroway, there was not a soul on board that would not have gladly returned to England, had it been in their power to do so, so great was the horror entertained of India; and the nearer the homeward bound vessel approached them, the more silent and thoughtful the whole party became. The homeward-bound took her studding sails in, hauled her mainsail up, and backed her mainyard, and came within hail.

Presently, a hoarse voice exclaimed, "Halloa! Sam Freeport! how are you?"

"How are you?" roared Sam in return, waving his cap, and then, taking the glass from the captain of the ship, he descried a man who had formerly been in his regiment, but had exchanged into another, in the hope of getting on better in India.

"Who is it, Sam?" inquired Harroway.

"Raxton," replied Sam, "looking as yellow as a buttercup."

Raxton and Harroway were great friends as youngsters. Holding on by the mizen shrouds, Harroway greeted him.

"What, George!" exclaimed Raxton. "are you going out? What's the state of the consols, my Rothschild?"

After a few civilities were exchanged, the ships parted, and each steered her own course.

Gloomy as they all seemed, and were, Mrs. Harroway's tongue soon put them in good humour; and before they went down to tea, it was universally admitted that "*whatever happens in this world is all for the best.*" In the evening whist was proposed, and played till nine o'clock, when the company retired to rest, contented and happy, with the exception of one—namely, she to whom all were indebted for such contentment and such happiness. She dreaded that her husband would be guilty of some folly that would cost him his commission; or that his tendency to excesses would endanger his life; or that something might happen to herself, and leave him without a protector to save him from absolute ruin and disgrace. Fate seemed to sneer at them. The wools which *she* had purchased to make slippers for her husband, had faded; the bobbins and cotton turned out rotten; the needles were rusted and useless; even the miniature of her father had suffered from the sea air, and the paint had peeled off from the ivory.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN the troop ship, after a tedious passage, arrived at Madras, orders were received that the regiment was to proceed to Bengal. Sam went on shore, and made the acquaintance of nearly all the community. He procured for the Harroways an invitation to stay with one of the judges while the vessel was refitted.

Freeport's first impressions of India were very favourable. People in those days were more hospitable than in these, and the treatment they received precisely came up to Freeport's idea of the way exiles in the east should behave towards one another. Harroway, too, was agree-

ably disappointed; and after leaving Madras he was comparatively steady—to his wife's intense satisfaction.

Sam was advised to hire servants in Madras for the mess, and he did so, and christened "the twelve" after the months in the year, "January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December."

When the detachment under Sam's command had landed in Calcutta, and were safely housed in Fort William, the ship which brought them into port took fire, and was burnt to the water's edge. Fortunately for the Harroways, Blew had taken all their traps out of her, when he removed those of his master; nearly every one else had been less urgent in getting their boxes out of the hold, and lost them. Sam always declared that if he had not been on board, George's luck would have burnt or sunk the ship, when they were out at sea; and in this opinion he was not singular in the regiment.

Freeport very soon established himself in the good graces of the Calcutta community; and being in command of the detachment, with the band, he made himself of great importance before the bulk of the corps arrived.

"We'll establish the mess at once," said Sam; and the mess was established. "We'll sink formalities, and call on everybody!" said Sam, and the proposition was agreed to.

One morning Freeport stepped over to Harroway's quarters, and said as they had been to various evening parties, it struck him they ought to give a ball. Mrs. Harroway suggested that they should wait till the remainder of the regiment arrived, but Sam declared that they ought to do it then or never, for if they waited the *eclat* would be gone.

Harroway agreed with Sam; and Anne instantly withdrew her objection, and consented to write the invitations.

Sam was determined that everything should be done in "first rate style," and gave orders which placed the mess funds in a rather rickety condition.

The evening came, and Freeport took an early dinner with the Harroways. He insisted on lending Anne Mrs. Missevery's tiara of diamonds and emeralds, and the brooch and bracelets to match. She declined, on the ground that a plain book muslin dress was not sufficiently handsome for such ornaments, and they would be preposterous. George instantly said that it was very evident she knew nothing about dress, or she would know that the simpler and plainer the dress, the better the jewellery, if it were good, looked on the person. Anne then accepted Sam's offer, and he sent Blew for the case. When it was opened, they had all a very hearty laugh.

"They are really *very* handsome!" exclaimed Anne, as she replaced them in the case. "How often have I heard these things talked about! They are said to be part of a set which a noble lord sold in York, without the permission of the rightful owner. The affair was hushed up, but the first night Mrs. Missevery wore them there was an immense sensation in the room; for a young lady called out, 'Mamma, I declare there is a woman in your tiara of diamonds!'"

"And they will cause a sensation to-night, I hope," said Sam. "I like sensations. You are right, Mrs. Harroway; they are very handsome indeed. I cannot afford to give them to you, because I keep them for luck; and hitherto they have done me much service."

"Do you know," said Anne, "I am afraid to wear them. They are very valuable, and I am so extremely unfortunate with borrowed property."

"They certainly are valuable," said Sam, "for Hamlet offered me fifteen hundred guineas for the set." (This was true.) "But you need not be afraid. Let Blew keep them till you are ready to go. No harm can happen to them."

Freeport and the Harroways went early to receive the guests. It was a most curious circumstance; but the first lady who entered the room so extremely resembled Mrs. Missevery, when dressed for a ball, that Sam was half frightened, and when she fixed her eyes so intently, and stared at the magnificent tiara, Anne had great difficulty in persuading herself that India was not the receptacle for the departed, and Mrs. Missevery was certainly "moving in the society." Harroway declared himself of opinion that it was no other person; and when the room filled, and Sam led the lady forth to dance "for luck, and out of respect for the dear departed," both Harroway and his wife were involuntarily carried back to the memorable night which had been so propitious for Sam Freeport.

The tiara, in good sooth, *did* cause a sensation; and Anne felt the eyes of every lady in the room upon the top of her head. One lady, who was very proud of her own jewellery, remarked in Sam's hearing, that they must be paste; and such opinion soon became general.

Amongst others present was a young girl, with large blue eyes and light flaxen hair. She had a tall commanding figure, and was, on the whole, a very showy personage. Her countenance was peculiarly winning—though the expression of her face had very little meaning in it. Her complexion was most beautifully fair and brilliant; and she appeared to have a vast number of admirers. She was married to an elderly gentleman, who seldom accompanied her to parties; and on this night he was enjoying a rubber at the club, and playing for much higher stakes than he could afford to lose.

Unlike Freeport in this particular, as in many others, George Harroway knew the names of very few people in the room; but curiosity prompted him to inquire that of the lady just described. He was informed she was a Mrs. Rosny.

"Rosny!" exclaimed Harroway, within himself (quoting a speech of Henry IV. of France)—"love me and serve me, for I am fully satisfied with thee!"

Ere many minutes had elapsed, Harroway and Mrs. Rosny were seated side by side on a couch, and chatting *tête-à-tête*. Anne was delighted to see this, for his indifference to everyone had become tedious and disagreeable.

Mrs. Rosny thought Harroway the handsomest man she had ever beheld. He could see she admired him, and therefore he strove to please her by pretty compliments.

Various people approached her, amongst others, Sam himself, and reminded her of engagements to dance; but she excused herself to all, and sat out. Harroway led her to the supper-table, and after they returned to the ball-room, their incipient flirtation continued.

"George is coming out in a new line," remarked Freeport to Anne.

"Is he?" she replied, feigning she had not observed him.

"Look at him!" returned Sam. "He has been talking to that pretty woman all night, and she seems regularly head over ears."

The fact was, Sam was a little piqued.

"I should not be at all surprised; for you will admit he is the handsomest man in the room," said Anne.

"Nothing of the kind," said Sam, laughing. "He is not anything like so handsome as I am."

"Well, as I am beginning to grow jealous," she replied, "just see if you can prevail, and attract her by your winning ways."

"Now then, observe!" said Sam; and he left Mrs. Harroway, and approached Mrs. Rosny and George.

The lady answered some query Sam put to her, but in such a manner as convinced Freeport she wished he would stay away. That colossus of coolness was not to be driven off, and he went on questioning further; but only with the same effect. The more impatience Mrs. Rosny betrayed, the more resolved was Freeport to remain. At length he got a chair, and seated himself on her left hand. Harroway and Mrs. Rosny remained silent, and looked steadily upon the floor. Several ladies were about to quit the room for their homes, when Sam was compelled to give up his persecution, and see them into their carriages. The moment he was gone, Mrs. Rosny's face beamed with smiles, and she resumed the very interesting conversation with George Harroway which Sam Freeport so abruptly interrupted.

Mrs. Harroway watched them closely. The repulse to Freeport amused her, but she was at a loss to account for the extraordinary change which had come over the conduct of her spouse. She was not jealous, but she thought his attentions were too marked, and the lady's unqualified acceptance of them rather unbecoming. There they sat until the room was almost empty, when Harroway very tenderly put Mrs. Rosny's shawl over her shoulders, and led her to her carriage.

CHAPTER XX.

"I AM charmed with Calcutta!" cried Harroway, the following morning, at breakfast. "There is a light-heartedness about the place which pleases me vastly."

"I am glad you like it, as we are likely to remain here for some time," said Anne. "And how did you enjoy yourself last evening?"

"Exceedingly!" he replied. "That Mrs. Rosny is one of the most agreeable persons you can imagine. We must make their acquaintance."

"Then you had better call upon them," suggested Anne.

"I intend doing so," said Harroway. "It strikes me that while we are here we had better make ourselves comfortable."

"I quite agree with you, George, and——"

At that moment Freeport entered the room to inform them that the rest of the corps were coming up the river Hooghley.

Sam was in anything but a good temper. Mrs. Rosny (whom he spoke of as "a cold unmeaning thing") had sorely wounded his vanity, and this was a grave and serious matter with Freeport. On being questioned by Harroway, as to what he was going to do with himself that

day, he replied that he intended to take a boat, and proceed down the river to meet the colonel.

When Freeport took his departure, Harroway made a particularly neat toilet, and placing himself in a palanquin, he repeated to the bearers some Hindostani words which he had committed to memory the night before. After being jolted for five-and-twenty minutes, he arrived at a large gate. The Durwan very politely inquired, in a mysterious way, "*Kon saheb?*"—What gentleman? "Doctor Saheb," said George; and the gates were instantly thrown open, and "bang" went a gong.

Mrs. Rosny was suffering from a severe headache (so she said), but she contrived to talk in an animated tone, and occasionally to laugh and show her beautiful teeth. Harroway thought, and so did many others, that she looked even prettier by day-light than by candle-light. The visit was prolonged to an hour's length, when the gong again sounded. Mrs. Rosny said, "this must be my lord and master!" and begging Harroway to stay tiffin, she removed herself to the opposite side of the marble table, and sat as prim as the mistress of a boarding-school just about to say grace before meat.

What was Mrs. Rosny's surprise to see Captain Freeport enter the room! What was Harroway's discomfiture! What was Sam's disgust on beholding George! Sam had gone to pay his respects—charged with cut and dried speeches and quotations from Byron, Shelley, and Keats. At the gate he had been refused admittance, but *by chance* he threw his arms out, opened wide his eyes, and said, "I'm a doctor!"—when he was let in immediately. "I thought, Freeport, you had gone to meet the colonel," said Harroway, after an awkward pause.

"Couldn't get a boat," said Sam, rather doggedly.

"The bore, perhaps," suggested Mrs. Rosny. "At this season of the year ———,"

"Oh! a horrible bore! Horrible! Horrible!" ejaculated Freeport, giving action to the words, and glancing at George Harroway. "Never knew such a bore in the whole course of my life!"

Sam made up his mind to sit his friend out; but in this he was foiled also; for his friend would not move; and they left the house together.

"I'll tell you what it is, George," said Sam—when they got into the road—"you have no more consideration in you than a Chinese image. I went there by appointment, as you might have seen, and there you sat, like a gawky, although I gave you as broad a hint as could be. The same thing occurred last night. You wouldn't go—although you saw, as plainly as possible, you were wanted to make yourself scarce. I'm surprised that a man who has lived so much *in* the world, isn't more a man *of* it!"

"Really, Sam, I am very sorry," returned Harroway. "I had no idea of your engagements, my dear fellow; but it shall never happen again."

"Very well, then; you understand the thing now," said Sam.

"Oh! perfectly," said Harroway. "Come and take luncheon with us, and say no more about it."

"It's an understood thing?" said Sam, making his fore finger and thumb into a bargaining note of interrogation, and looking the acme of knowingness.

"An understood thing!" repeated Harroway, with a frowning seriousness, while inwardly he was consumed with laughter.

When he reached his quarters in Fort William, George was greeted by his wife. She seized both his hands, and said, "George, dear! a letter from my father brings us very, very good news!"

"Impossible?" cried Harroway, fancying from her extreme joyousness that the bulk of his fortune was coming back to him. "What is it?" and he grew pale with anxiety for the reply.

"The purchase money is placed at the agents', George, and there is no chance now of your losing the step! Was it not good of the dear old man to think of us before any one else?"

"Why, that's certainly better than nothing," quoth Harroway. "Yes—very good of him indeed."

Anne's heart fell from its zenith of joy into an abyss of misery; but she hid her feelings, and turning to Freeport, she said—"I have never thanked you for lending me those handsome ornaments. I have redelivered them safely into Mr. Blew's custody."

Sam was vexed with George's coldness, and he replied—

"Why, I never intended you to return them. I intended you to keep them. I was only joking, when I said I could not afford to part with them. I don't value 'em at one straw. Keep 'em, or sell 'em, or do what you like with 'em!"

"Indeed not!" said Anne. "I would not think of it; at the same time, I am not insensible of your generosity. They are emblems of fortune with you; with us, they might be the very reverse."

"You are quite right not to accept so handsome a present, and deprive Freeport of so many valuables," observed Harroway; "but as far as luck is concerned, I should say it would be utterly impossible to change ours for the worse. I should not be at all surprised to hear, by the next ship that arrives, that the agents have failed, and the purchase money is only sixpence in the pound."

"Well, dear, and that would not be the death of us!" said Anne, laughing.

"Of course it would not," said Harroway.

"What nonsense to talk about the agents breaking," said Sam. "The thing is quite absurd!"

CHAPTER XXI.

Mr. and Mrs. Rosny requested the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. Harroway's company to dinner, and the invite was accepted. The style in which their friends lived struck the subaltern and his wife with amazement. The table glittered with silver and glass, and literally groaned with the weight of the viands placed upon it. The word "sumptuous" but feebly conveys to the mind the order of extravagance that there prevailed. Mr. Rosny was a merchant in an extensive way of business, and enjoyed a considerable amount of public confidence. His hospitality was as unbounded as was Sam's when that gentleman kept open house in Portland Place.

Anne enjoyed herself very much. The scene was new to her. But Harroway was exceedingly vexed and disappointed that he could not

sit beside the hostess—that honour having fallen to a person of greater importance. He handed in a lady, who must have thought him a most uncouth monster; for he never once opened his lips to her, beyond performing the commonest civilities. It was half past ten o'clock before the ladies rose from the table, and long before then Freeport had yielded to the effects of the punkah, and was sound asleep in his chair.

Harroway was one of the first to go into the drawing room, and when Mr. Rosny was left alone, he attempted to arouse his sleeping guest; but in vain. A grunt, and “all right!”—or “don't be a childish fool!” was the only response his endeavours met with.

The servants, after their master had retired to the drawing room, thought *they* might as well try to awaken the sleeper; but annoyed with their importunity, and faneying that he was at mess between two impudent ensigns, he folded his arms tightly across his chest, and then threw his elbows out, suddenly; and so effective was the deed, that the servants filed off right and left, and suffered Freeport to sleep on in peace and quietness.

Towards midnight the party broke up, and the host and hostess sought repose after the labour of entertaining so many persons who were comparative strangers to them. The oil in the greater part of the wall-shades was burnt out; and when the bearers went to extinguish such of the flickering ministers as remained, they did not observe that Freeport was still sleeping in the dining room.

At about two o'clock in the morning Freeport awoke. He had not the most remote idea of where he was; but fancied he was at home, of course. All was dark around him—and he wished to find the door and go quietly to bed. He arose from his chair and felt for the wall, which he found after stumbling over several chairs, and other articles of furniture that stood in his way. Running his hand along the wall in search of the door, Freeport at length came to it, and very carefully walked out, and got into the drawing room. He there fell over several things, and at last came in contact with something muffled up in a blanket. He kicked it, and said, “Get up, you wretch! How often have I told you never to sleep here? I'm not going to have my sitting room turned into a dormitory for you black brutes. Get up you!”

It was an *ayah* that Sam stumbled over. The affrighted woman rushed up stairs into Mr. Rosny's room, and declared there was a Sahib below stairs.

“*Kia bat?*” (What do you say?) asked Mr. Rosny.

“*Ek Sahib,*” (a gentleman) said the affrighted *ayah*, shuddering.

“Nonsense! exclaimed Mrs. Rosny. “That woman is always eating opium and smoking bang. She's mad,” and then, addressing the *ayah*. Mrs. Rosny said, “*Jou, paugal.*” (Begone, you fool!)

Freeport thought the disturbed person, who was sleeping on the carpet, was still in the room, and he growled out, “Get some *hog*” (ag—fire), he meant to say, “*Buttye lao*” (bring a light); but as he was not answered, he roared, “*Blew!*” with all his might and main.

It never occurred to Rosny that Sam had been left asleep, and his wife knew nothing about it.

“*Blew!* you vagabond!” roared Sam.

The native servants became alarmed, and ran out of the house.

"Egad! there *is* somebody," said Rosny. "What's the meaning of this?"

Rosny was not what is termed "a plucky man," by any means, and though his curiosity was very great, he was nevertheless remarkably slow in gratifying it.

"Don't, for heaven's sake, my love, go down stairs," cried Mrs. Rosny. "You may be assassinated."

"I'm not afraid!" said Rosny; but if he were not afraid, it is odd that he took full five minutes to slip on his dressing gown, and went no further than the landing, when he called out, in a subdued voice—"Bearer! Bearer!"

Sam heard him, and imagining that the voice proceeded from an officer who had rooms in the same staircase, he exclaimed, "Ah, you may sing out 'Bearer' till you are as black in the face as they are! but if I can get a candle, I'll settle some of their hashes, and teach Master Blew a lesson into the bargain."

Such an expression as "settling the hash," seemed to Rosny so blood-thirsty that he hardly knew how to act. He determined to "face the foe," so he said; but then he proceeded to dress; and seemed very particular about his garments. Mrs. Rosny, who was commonly a timid creature, on this occasion was very brave. She seized the taper and rushed down stairs as fast as possible.

"Good Heavens! Mrs. Rosny!" exclaimed Sam, when he saw her, "what is all this? What brought *you* here? Welcome to this dreary abode!"

"What brought *you* here?" said the lady, laughing.

Sam looked round the room, the truth flashed across him *instantly*—and he made the most humble apology.

Mrs. Rosny then raised a loud and ringing laugh, which she knew would reach her husband's ears, and bring him down stairs. Down he came, and on beholding Freeport (his heart being freed from its alarms), he joined his wife in the laugh, and pronounced the whole affair to be "a deuced good joke."

* * * * *

At half past eleven next morning Sam called at the house, in the hope of finding Mrs. Rosny alone, and talking over the unfortunate affair which had happened; but to his horror and dismay, there was George Harroway, who seemed quite as much at home there as was Mr. Rosny himself. Freeport now saw that his presence was *de trop*, and, having made up his mind to flirt with Mrs. Harroway, he abridged his visit, and returned to the fort.

Mrs. Rosny seemed vastly amused with the adventure of the past night, and while she buried her pretty face in her hands, and laughed at her own thoughts, she shook her ambrosial curls in a way which made George Harroway think her a perfect Hebe.

The hours sped quickly while Harroway and Mrs. Rosny discoursed, with impressiveness, on an infinity of subjects. It was tiffin time. George was invited to remain, and did so; and it was past four o'clock before he got home, where he found Sam Freeport superintending the putting up of a piano, which he said he had "bought at a sale—just for luck."

CHAPTER XXII.

HARROWAY suggested to his wife the propriety of fitting up their quarters in something like "style," and proposed attending an auction for the purpose of making purchases. She gave several reasons why they should do nothing of the kind:—1st. She heard the Colonel say they were likely to move up the country earlier than was expected; 2nd, they had already sufficient for their wants and position; and, 3rd, they had no money, and could only make an outlay by running into debt. All these reasons were overruled, as absurd, childish, and ridiculous. "As for *debt*," her husband observed, "I am told it is the custom of the country."

Anne had heard her husband often boast that he never owed a shilling in his life for more than a few days together, and this change of sentiment she regarded as a bad omen. She argued the point strenuously; but she might have spared herself the trouble, for he became extremely irate, and vowed that in future he would never consult her respecting any of his affairs.

Day after day there came into their quarters some costly article of furniture, glassware, china, plate, &c. &c. &c. And at length a carriage and pair was purchased, and a very handsome saddle horse. The facility with which he gained credit edged Harroway on, and in less than one month he was upwards of 1000*l.* in debt, when in reality he could not have commanded a hundred.

Since their acquaintance with the Rosnys, Harroway had become very abstemious, both at home and abroad. His wife had strong suspicions, but she did not venture to breathe them. The Rosnys, at Harroway's request, were invited to dine, and then those suspicions grew into a certainty, and Anne felt that the friendship which existed between her husband and Mrs. Rosny had better terminate, ere it led to the unhappiness of all parties. Had she been satisfied that her husband could take care of himself—had she been assured that he would not have fallen to ruin, and perhaps destitution, her pride would have induced her to return to England, and never see his face again. But she saw before her his downfall, if she left him to himself; and bitter would have been the reflection to her that one who commenced life so auspiciously closed his career in infamy and disgrace, when, by judicious conduct on her part, it might be in her power to save him. It was no fault of hers, but she felt that his union with her was the cause of his pecuniary misfortunes, and of whatever alteration those misfortunes had wrought in his disposition, his nature, and his habits. How was she to act? That was the question. Others, besides Sam Freeport, paid her great attention, and she could easily have flirted, and made Harroway jealous. But that would have brought on the very crisis she wished to avoid. To feign not to see the growing attachment on her husband's part, would be to give him an impunity. As for the lady, Anne saw that her preference for George was purely a preference of the day, and that as soon as he left her locality, he would not hold the faintest place in her memory, and that whatever place he then held would be very speedily filled up by some other admirer.

Mr. Rosny seemed rather pleased than otherwise at the attentions his wife received, while for Harroway he evinced a particular liking and regard. This increased Anne's difficulty, and she really knew not what to

do. Wherever Mrs. Rosny's carriage was to be seen, there was Harroway (who got the nick-name of "the count") riding by the side of it. No matter whether Mr. Rosny was present or absent, it was all the same. Freeport had frequently expostulated with his friend, but to no purpose. He was invariably answered with a laugh.

There was to be a public ball in Calcutta, in celebration of the glories of some hero, and Anne intended going; but when the evening came she declined doing so, apparently to her husband's satisfaction, a circumstance which wounded her to the soul. She had reason to be glad she stayed away, for George had scarcely left her when she received a long letter from her father. He spoke of his circumstances in the most cheering terms, and the certainty, if he were spared for a few years longer, of retrieving all, or at least realizing a handsome fortune for his family, herself included. But strange to say, the money the old man sent to London was not deposited, for the purchase of Harroway's company, according to his instructions, and was lost by the failure of the house through which it was remitted. But her father faithfully promised that before long, and in good time, the amount should be forthcoming.

"I declare," sighed Anne, as she folded up the letter, "the ill luck is all upon his own side, and if he had not lost all his money in the way he did, he would have lost it in some other."

And then she debated with herself whether she should show the letter to her husband or not.

CHAPTER XXIII.

At the ball, Mrs. Rosny appeared in great splendour. Not only in her beauty, but in her dress, did she outshine every other lady present. Harroway was waiting at the door, and took her from her husband's arm the moment she arrived on the landing. Rosny did not remain ten minutes in the room. He seemed far from collected and comfortable, and retreated hastily and unobserved.

"Oh! such a thing is going to happen!" said Mrs. Rosny, looking up imploringly in George's face, and shuddering, while a pretty smile played about her lips.

"I hope not," said Harroway.

"Oh, it must, I fear," said the lady. "You will hear of it to-morrow."

"What is it?" he inquired.

"A calamity," she sighed.

"It will not affect *you*, I hope," said George, tenderly.

"Not me, perhaps," she remarked. "But poor Mr. Rosny. He will be obliged to go away."

"You don't mean to call that a calamity," remarked Harroway, with a quiet laugh.

"Oh, but that's not all. It's quite dreadful, really. Such a thing, to be sure! But it can't be helped."

"Do tell me," said George. "If you have a sorrow, let it be my happiness to share it."

"Perhaps I will, after this dance," she replied. "What is it to be? A quadrille?"

"No; a waltz."

"I'm so glad of that," quoth the lady. "I hate quadrilles."

When the dance was over, Harroway led Mrs. Rosny to a quiet part of the room.

"Oh, dear!" she said; "I am almost afraid to tell you; but you must not mention it to a soul."

"On my life, I will not," said George, impatient to be informed.

"If they could only have put it off for another month," said the lady, pouting her lip, and picking to pieces a rose-bud, "I should not have cared; but Rosny says it will not look well for me to appear in public while he is away, and there is to be that fancy ball on the twenty-third, and my dress and everything is all ready. I never knew anything so provoking. Though I can't see what I have to do with the firm."

Harroway begged her to be explicit; and she then told him in confidence that the firm of which her husband was a partner, would suspend payment on the following day, and that "*poor* Mr. Rosny" was then on his way to the Danish Settlement.

Where the "Danish Settlement" might be, George Harroway was profoundly ignorant; but he supposed it was somewhere in, near, or contiguous to Denmark, and certainly not in India. He knew, however, the misery and the utter wretchedness which usually attends the crash of a mercantile firm in the mother country, and he supposed the results were the same in the east. He supposed, moreover, that Rosny had deceived her, innocent young creature, as to the privations she would have to endure, and what would be the altered state of their circumstances. Harroway knew what he himself had suffered, and he sympathised with Mrs. Rosny from the very bottom of his heart; and when she arose to fill an engagement to dance with some one else, he watched her take her place with the tenderest emotions that pity can call up. He wondered whether Rosny would really take himself off to another country and leave that fair face and fragile form without a protector, in a land where she had no relations, and probably few friends, now that the winter of their circumstances had set in. Verily, in these matters, was George Harroway very green. What were his sighs and longings, as he looked at that woman, to possess the fortune that he *once* possessed! Casting aside all courtesy, he took her from her partner the moment the quadrille was concluded, and led her to a couch, where he talked to her, not despondingly, but in a very serious strain. The more she laughed, and the gayer she looked, the more George Harroway sorrowed for her lot. He told her, as a means of alleviating the jagged feelings she would probably experience, that he was once worth six thousand pounds a year, and that, at the present time, he was "worse off than worth nothing;" and although she replied, with an unmeaning smile, ill-becoming her words, "So Captain Freeport mentioned the other evening," he attributed it solely to that ignorance of worldly affairs which a truly feminine character ought to possess. Her recurrence to the forthcoming fancy ball reminded him of a young child amused at the pomp attendant on its parent's funeral. Her levity and cheerfulness increased his feeling for her, and it was with difficulty he refrained from tears. Some other person claimed her as his partner, and she was again obliged to leave George Harroway's side. He walked into the refreshment-room, and while he swallowed a glass of champagne, he cursed his

ill luck; for to his acquaintance with her, and to his friendship with her husband, he attributed the failure of the firm and the reverses of fortune Rosny and his wife were about to experience. The night waned, and the ball-room thinned.

Harroway saw Mrs. Rosny to her carriage, bade her good night, blessed her, and promised to see her on the following day; then, returning to the supper-room, he drowned her griefs and his own together in a bottle of his favourite wine.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOR the want of something better to do, and being extremely annoyed with Harroway, Sam Freeport, at the ball, paid very great attention to a Miss Pannoety, a *brunette*, who spoke English with a foreign accent. It was neither a French, German, Italian, or Spanish accent. Miss Pannoety was not good-looking; but plain, and very thin. In looks, she was the very reverse of Mrs. Rosny; and perhaps this had something to do with Freeport's selection of her, for Mrs. Rosny was entirely out of Sam's favour. Some one told Freeport that Miss Pannoety had three lacks of rupees; and, to a question "how many thousand pounds sterling is that?" he was informed, "Thirty." "Thirty thousand pound sterling," reckoned Sam, "would give me about twelve hundred pound a year. Well, I may go further and fare worse—I'll have her. There will be no chance of her making me unhappy, at all events. She looks old enough to make up her mind at once, and say 'yes' or 'no;' and before I part with her this night, I'll put the question."

After rehearsing to himself two or three little speeches which were likely to captivate "the brunette," Sam seated himself beside her, and commenced the attack. The flattery soothed Miss Pannoety—she was not used to it—no man before had been bold enough to tell her she was beautiful, and hint that she had "a soft Ionian face"—a "child of the Isles." She was thrown into a kind of coma, and when the question came, she was only too glad to answer in the affirmative.

It was extraordinary the progress that Freeport could make in a few hours. He used to run immense risks of failure; for, in reality, he did not care.

The following day, Freeport called upon Anne, to tell her of his success in having engaged himself to an heiress, a woman worth thirty thousand pounds. Anne could not laugh at his facetiousness, for she was too unhappy; but she listened to his description of "the brunette," and made several remarks.

"You don't seem cheerful to-day. What is the matter?" inquired Sam.

"Nothing in the world," she replied. "But I am weary."

"What has become of George?"

"I know not. He went out immediately after breakfast, and I have not seen him since."

"I tell you what it is," said Sam, "George is making a great fool of himself, and you ought not to allow it."

"He means nothing," returned Anne; "and why should not he amuse himself, poor fellow? Besides, how can I control him?"

"Well, you ought to try," urged Sam. "I have spoken to him two or three times; but he only laughs at me. If I was a married man, in his circumstances, I'd be ashamed to go on as he does."

Anne could not help smiling; but it was a great exertion. After a brief discourse, Freeport took his departure, and left Mrs. Harroway to her own reflections. George was at that moment conversing with Mrs. Rosny. His sorrow had very considerably abated since she told him that the house and furniture, carriages, horses, &c. &c., were settled upon herself, and couldn't be touched, besides two lacks of rupees (20,000*l.*) in bank of Bengal shares.

"Poor Mr. Rosny," she exclaimed, "this is the second time it has happened. The first time caused the death of my predecessor. Everything went. But, thank Heaven, people are wiser now-a-days, and Rosny learnt prudence in his last misfortune. But then there's something so horrid in seeing one's name in the papers, and then to be cooped up for a month, just for the sake of appearances! Oh, dear, it is quite dreadful! I have a very great mind to take a trip to Penang for my health. I wish we could make a party."

"Oh, don't go to Penang, pray!" cried George. "Come and stay with us till Rosny can return."

"I am afraid of the Fort. They say it is unhealthy. But I should be delighted if you could come and stay here. I could go out with Mrs. Harroway, and she would protect me."

"Of course you could," said Harroway. "There could not be the slightest objection to that?"

"And I might go to the fancy ball with you?"

"Of course you could. Why not? I'll propose it to my wife as soon as I get home."

"Had I not better write to Mrs. Harroway, and ask her?" suggested Mrs. Rosny.

"Ah! perhaps that will be best," conceded Harroway.

"Poor Mr. Rosny!" sighed the lady. "We had a very pleasant party last evening—had we not?"

Freeport called on "the brunette," and found her to be a woman of business, as well as of "keen sensibility." She was full of the breaking up of Rosny & Co., which, by this time, was all over Calcutta. The brunette discussed the amount of dividend that would be probably forthcoming, and she estimated it at a remarkably low figure. She pulled Mrs. Rosny into very little pieces, and told Sam an infinity of stories which were *piquant* and amusing. The brunette's father was a merchant, who did business in a safe and quiet way, and he had also "a foreign accent," for when his daughter introduced Sam, he said, "How do you do, sare?"

The brunette was infected with a family pride, which induced her to be continually discanting on her grandfather, who had been "in the Sudder Board." (What the Sudder was Sam had not the most remote idea.)

The brunette, too, had a way of interlarding her conversation with Hindustani words, such as "*mutlub*," "*pench*," "*gup*," "*mahin hoga*," "*chul*," "*acha*," "*cheechee*," "*bundobust*," and so forth. On Sam, who was ignorant of every tongue but his own, these words were thrown away, and what was worse, they frequently destroyed the context. In

"society" the brunette was on her guard, and did not use these familiar parts of speech; but in her home, nature would out, and nothing in this world could hold them in.

The brunette, by day-light, disappointed Freeport, and he had to tax his powers of dissemblance to the very utmost to enable him to conceal his feelings. He stayed tiffin, and when the sun had gone down, he rode out with the brunette and her fat father in their carriage, a sort of Patagonian landau. On the course Sam crossed his arms, and laid himself back, in a very commanding attitude, and whenever he met any of his friends or acquaintances, he bowed with a profundity that was quite overpowering. Sam saw Mrs. Harroway, and his face was instantly lighted up with a smile, and he kissed his hand in such a manner that she was forced to laugh heartily as soon as the Pannoety's carriage had passed, although she was truly wretched. Anne felt *alone* in India. Freeport's fun reminded her of other days, and after the momentary merriment which it occasioned was over, her recollections were replete with bitterness and disgust.

CHAPTER XXV.

"INDEED not! I will do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Anne, after reading a letter from Mrs. Rosny, and destroying it.

"What is that?" asked her husband.

"An invitation to spend a fortnight with Mrs. Rosny—she is so lonely, poor thing."

"And why shouldn't you accept it, Anne?"

"Because, George, I prefer remaining in my own house."

"Is not that very selfish of you?"

"It may be. But she must have older friends than myself, and more congenial spirits in this place."

"Here is a poor woman in distress of mind, her husband forced to flee, and leave her alone; she asks you a favour, and you refuse to grant it, because you like your own house better than hers, and will not give it up for a fortnight. Selfish! dreadfully selfish!"

"I will never be an inmate of her house, George."

"Then, under the circumstances, invite her to stay with you, instead. That is the least you can do."

"No, nor shall she ever come here, except as a mere visitor."

"Why not?"

"Because I dislike her."

"That's no reason at all," urged Harroway, "why you should not be civil. If you want go there, you must invite her to come here. The fact is, you believe all the idle tales and stories that have got abroad to the poor innocent creature's disparagement. It is the penalty that every pretty woman has to pay—to be pulled to pieces and run down by all the plain ones that surround her."

"Really, George, you don't take me to be a downright fool, do you?"

"Of course not. That's the reason I argue the point. Come, come; either accept her invite, or ask her to remain with us till old Rosny can return?"

"*Never!*" replied Anne, firmly.

Harroway strolled to the quarters of his friend Sam, whom he found entertaining the brunette's fat father. Harroway was introduced as "our colonel," and resuming his seat, Sam recommenced the most extravagant rhodomontade imaginable, and appealed to "the colonel," ever and anon, to confirm his statements, or assist his memory. When the brunette's father had taken leave, and driven from the door, Sam said,

"Now, George, we will have a mild glass of grog, and a cheroot, as of yore—talk of old times, or of the present—if you think them more agreeable. Look here, George, I feel disposed to back out of my engagement with the brunette. Instead of having thirty thousand pounds, she has not got a fifth part of it, and that the fellow hints about settling, and all that. Besides, brunettes are so very common in this country, I should prefer a blonde. But the misfortune is, I have been fool enough to write to her no end of letters, out of that book of mine, and there might be some difficulty, you know, in getting off the bargain. What would you recommend?"

"Really, Sam, I don't know how to advise you. It was very foolish, certainly in you, putting pen to paper."

"Of course it was. But it is done, and it can't be helped. I shall know better another time. What could I say—eh, George?"

"Oh, say you've changed your mind, or say you can't afford to marry."

"But then that's no excuse," argued Sam. "Look here, George," he continued, stretching his humorous face forwards, and laughing the while; "couldn't I say that an order has just been received from the Horse Guards, to the effect that no officer in the Queen's service can marry without the Queen's consent, on pain of forfeiting his commission?"

"Yes, you might say that," replied Harroway, smiling at the idea; "but would they believe it?"

"Oh, I'd make 'em believe it," said Sam, puffing away, and looking all confidence in his own powers of persuasion. "Why, George, if it comes to believing it, I'd sit down in their presence, and write a formal letter to Lord Hill, asking him if he would procure the consent of the Queen to my uniting myself in wedlock to Clementina Georgiana Pannoety, daughter of Augustus Frederick Pannoety, and grand-daughter of the Sudder Board,—requesting his Lordship, at the same time, to send his reply to the said Clementina Georgiana—and then, you know, I could leave them to forward it, and pay the postage—eh, George? It strikes me that that's a very good way."

"You'll be getting into a scrape," said Harroway.

"Not a bit of it," laughed Sam. "I don't think I could get into a scrape with the authorities, if I tried; and if I did, I could very soon get out of it."

"There will be no harm in making the experiment," remarked Harroway. "But I am doubtful of the success, Sam."

"Sure to succeed, George," exclaimed Freeport. "Would you believe it, my dear fellow, they positively don't know where Portland Place is! There's an amount of ignorance for you—eh, George?"

"Do you intend going to this fancy ball on the 23rd, Sam?" inquired Harroway.

"Of course I do," replied Freeport, "and we are going to have a group. I shall appear as *Othello*, the brunette as *Desdemona*, and the

old fellow as *Iago*. I wish you'd come as *Cassio*, George, just to heighten the effect."

"You are joking, Sam," said Harroway.

"I give you my word and honour I am not," he replied. "Dresses of the most costly material were ordered this very morning; and I read the play to the brunette, and very nearly burst out laughing, when I came to that part about 'scaring a skin as white as monumental alabaster.' Oh, such a lark, George! She had never heard of the play before!"

After immoderate laughter, in which his friend joined, Harroway regretted that he would be unable to take a part in the group, as he had made up his mind to go as Henry II.

"What's the fun of going as Henry II.?"

"Oh, nothing—a mere whim."

Sam looked at Harroway steadily, and said—"I shall advise Mrs. Harroway to go as the Duchess of Guienne."

"What do you mean?" said Harroway, pretending not to understand him.

"Oh, I know who your Fair Rosamond is to be, my good fellow. I tell you what it is, George, I never saw a man so altered as you are in the whole course of my life."

CHAPTER XXVI.

FREEPORT was anxious to have Anne's approval of his plan for getting rid of his engagement with the brunette; and, for this purpose, he called upon her. But before he touched upon the topic, he alluded to the costume in which her spouse was to appear.

"Henry the Second?" said Anne; and then, thinking for a few moments, she tossed her head in disgust. "And how do *you* intend to go, Captain Freeport?" she inquired.

Sam told her the whole story of "the group."

"Do you know, I am disposed to be very mischievous?" said Anne. "And you would do me a great favour if you would aid me in a little rebellion against my lord and master. If you had not George's welfare at heart, I would not ask you."

"What is it? I'll do anything in the world for you, from resigning the service up to jumping into the river," cried Sam.

"Nothing so dreadful as either," said Anne, with a dejected smile. "But if you could go as Henry the Second yourself, and take the brunette as 'Fair Rosamond,' it would afford me great satisfaction to witness the vexation it would occasion in others."

"Glorious! glorious!" ejaculated Sam. "I'll do it, with all my heart. I'll tease George to death, and Mrs. Rosny too, when we meet there. But how can I get the dresses, eh?"

"You can easily find out where George and his Rosamond are getting their dresses made up, and order the *facsimiles*. Go to Madame Gervaine's. But I doubt not you will devise means to carry out the detail, now that I have made the suggestion."

"All right," said Sam. "Yes; leave it all to me. I will go to the brunette at once, and I will tell her it is impossible to procure the

proper black for Othello's face, and we must go in some other characters. What's more, I will make her take me in her palanquin carriage, and order the dresses. How disgusted George will be. It's capital. How came you to think of it?"

"There's no time to be lost," said Anne. "You must get them made up at once, or you will be too late."

Freeport borrowed a friend's buggy, drove to the brunette's mansion, talked her over in a few minutes, and was soon on his way with her to Madame Gervaine's.

On the tables were spread out, as "decoy ducks," a variety of costumes in various stages of perfection. Some were correct enough to be recognised, others required explanation. The most magnificent of the collection was a skirt of rich rose-coloured satin, a jacket of deep blue velvet, trimmed with ermine, with long sleeves richly embroidered in gold; and for the head-dress was a veil, also embroidered in gold.

"And what may this be?" inquired Sam, pointing to the dress just described.

"Fair Rosamond!" was the reply.

"And who may be going as fair Rosamond?" he asked.

"That I am not permitted to say," said the milliner.

"Then do not, by any means," said Sam; and then turning to the brunette he remarked—"I have not seen anything that would become *you* half so much as would that. Take my advice—have one like it."

The milliner was fearful of offending Mrs. Rosny by making up a duplicate of her dress; but then the brunette was too good a customer, and too touchy, to be told that the dress of Fair Rosamond would not become her. There was Madame Gervaine between her two good customers; one of them she was sure to lose. The brunette gained the day, because she was the best and most regular pay; and Mrs. Rosny was already so deep in the books, that if she withdrew and settled accounts, the loss of her custom would be of very little consequence. Then was brought forth the costume of Henry II., or something that that monarch was supposed to wear—velvet and gold, purple satin, and so forth; and these materials, when put into shape, were to cost Sam Freeport four hundred and fifty rupees, or forty-five pounds.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HARROWAY had not the slightest idea that his wife would go to the ball; and he seemed a little ruffled when she expressed her intention. Nor did he quite understand her willingness to escort Mrs. Rosny. His dress was intended, (so he told his wife,) as that of "David the First, King of Scotland."

Freeport and the brunette were very early. They sat under the canopy, or "in the bower," as Sam called it—till the room was well filled, and then they sallied forth for admiration.

Mrs. Rosny made a point of always being late, and it was nearly eleven before herself and the Harroways made their appearance on the night in question. They had not been in the room more than one minute when Mrs. Rosny beheld Miss Pannoeety and Captain Freeport.



THE TWO FAIR ROSAMONDS.

"Well, I declare!" she gasped. "Oh, that horrible creature! I could really sit down and cry with passion."

"What is the matter?" asked George Harroway.

"To think, after all my trouble and anxiety, that that abominable shrivelled wizened mahogany thing should appear as my double! This, I suppose, is one of Captain Freeport's practical jokes!"

Harroway and his wife both caught sight of Sam and his brunette. Harroway was extremely annoyed, and sympathized with Mrs. Rosny; but Anne laughed out loudly—and thus threw salt on Mrs. Rosny's lacerated feelings.

"I am sorry now that I sent the carriage away," said Mrs. Rosny. "I would go home at once—I am ashamed to show myself. Horrible creature!"

"What, *another* Fair Rosamond!" said an old friend of Mrs. Rosny's—extending his hand.

"You don't mean to call *that* creature fair?" she answered, and turned away. "Let us sit down in some obscure corner. Did you ever know anything so provoking, Mrs. Harroway?"

"Very provoking," quoth Anne. "But don't let any one see that you are annoyed. Disguise your feelings. Just walk round, and never notice them. The contrast ought to delight you. I will remain here. Now walk round the room quietly, with Mr. Harroway."

The advice was followed; and ere long Mrs. Rosny and Harroway were followed by Sam Freeport and his "fair Rosamond." Miss Pannoety had no notion that her double was to be Mrs. Rosny.

"You must pay her a compliment," said Sam, "as soon as you catch her eye. Tell her how nice she looks, and ask her to be our *vis-à-vis* in the next dance."

"What are the people grinning at?" said Mrs. Rosny to Harroway. Had she looked round, she would have seen Sam setting all sorts of ridiculous faces. Sam did not care about her chagrin. She had several times severely wounded his vanity, and to wound hers in return was sweet rather than otherwise. Nor had he the slightest consideration for his friend George.

Presently, Harroway and Mrs. Rosny halted opposite to Anne's chair, when Freeport drew up Miss Pannoety and "formed line,"—placing the two ladies shoulder to shoulder.

Miss Pannoety then complimented Mrs. Rosny; but she received no answer. Sam then asked George if they wanted a *vis-à-vis*. Harroway tried to get up a scowl; but it ended in a titter. This enraged Mrs. Rosny, and leaving his arm, she sat beside Anne, who enjoyed the scene, and gloried in its success.

A more vain woman than Mrs. Rosny never existed. She had gone to that ball fully determined to be the character of the evening; and when she saw Harroway and Sam laughing together, she concluded that she had been betrayed, by one in whom she reposed the greatest confidence—and she determined never to speak to George after that night. Her suspicions, moreover, were confirmed. Sam had left his Rosamond in the bower, while he went to "apologize" to Harroway, and after they had laughed in each other's faces, Sam slipped his arm through that of his brother monarch, and led him up to Miss Pannoety.

"Let me introduce my friend, Colonel Harroway," said Sam, "and,

if you are not engaged, he will be delighted to dance the next quadrille with you."

She said she would be "very happy."

Harroway felt that he was in a very awkward position—saddled with a Rosamond, whom he wished to avoid—but he was obliged to bow. Sam was afraid George might run away, and not come near her again—so he saw Miss Pannoety well on his arm, and left them in conversation. Freeport now approached Mrs. Rosny, and requested the honour; but she coldly declined, and looked across the room.

"Will *you*, Mrs. Harroway?" said Sam, addressing Anne. "Will *you* give me the happiness?"

Anne consented, and soon found herself opposite to her husband and Sam's brunette.

Mrs. Rosny now encouraged all her discarded *beaux* to pay her attention, and she was literally surrounded and hidden by them; and when George Harroway attempted to disperse the mob, and engross all her attention and smiles, he felt repulsed, and cut dead.

Before supper time Mrs. Rosny disappeared from the room, and left the Harroways to get home in the best manner they could, which, by the way, was in Sam Freeport's friend's buggy. It was thus Mrs. Harroway, by a little clever ingenuity, put a satisfactory end to her husband's desperate flirtation with "the perfect Hebe."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A FEW days after the ball, Harroway came to his senses. He stayed at home, talked to his wife, read to her, and was, in every respect, what he used to be when he had not a care in the world. One morning, they rose at break of day and walked by the river's side towards Garden Reach. The cold weather was about to set in, and the birds chirped as though they belonged to a colder clime. The river was assuming a bluish tint, and seemed vying with the sky. The ships even wore a jaunty air; and when the sun got up, a happier scene could hardly be gazed upon.

"Look, dear George," cried Anne, "see how the sun dissipates yonder fog, and laughs at it. Oh! how I hope we may survive all our misfortunes and folly, and that the evening of our life may yet be cheerful and happy."

"You may well say 'folly,'" returned Harroway. "Well, Anne, for your sake, as well as my own, I hope the omen may be propitious. Misfortune makes some men wise, but of others it makes perfect fools."

"Never mind that," returned Anne; "let us look to the future and not to the past. Do you know, dear George, I feel quite excited and joyous."

They walked along the road, talking of other times, till Anne felt rather fatigued, and proposed returning. They had not re-crossed the Hastings Bridge when a large dark cloud appeared exactly before them, and from it issued vivid forked lightning, which was followed by loud thunder. They hastened towards home, but before they reached the Fort, large drops began to fall, and by the time they passed the gate both

of them were completely drenched. In their sight, and within twenty yards, a sepoy on guard was struck dead by the lightning, and his musket twisted like a corkscrew. It was an awful storm, and while it lasted neither Harroway nor his wife spoke a single word. When it passed over, they sat down to breakfast, and in the middle of the meal Sam Freeport walked into the room, looking more dejected than can be described.

"Have you heard of a man being killed at the gate?" inquired Sam.

"Yes; we were unfortunate enough to see it," replied Anne.

"And have you heard," said Sam, looking at George, "that that plausible scoundrel who dined at our mess last week, and for whom I went security for 800*l.*, has walked out of the country, and left me to pay it?"

"You don't mean to say so?" exclaimed Harroway, turning pale.

"I do, indeed," said Sam, "and how I am to stump up, without parting with the tiara, I really don't know."

"How foolish of you to go security for any man, especially for one whom you could know so very little of," remarked Anne.

"For any man!" echoed Sam, with a laugh. "For any man, eh? Bless your soul! I have gone security for half a dozen since I have been in Calcutta. They told me it was a mere matter of form; and, as such, I signed the bond. I never supposed for a moment that the fellow would be such a vagabond as to leave me in the lurch by running out of the country. I say, George, that's an Indian matter of form, eh?" and at the last sentence Sam laughed; but to Mrs. Harroway's discomfiture her husband did not join him, but looked very serious and twitched his whiskers.

"Go security?" reiterated Sam, savagely munching a muffin. "Go security? Let me see. I have gone security for one, two, three, four, five, six, seven—for seven fellows; and take them at an average of, say 800*l.* a piece, that's seven times eight—fifty-six—five thousand six hundred pounds! Where they'd get anything like that out of a captain of a marching regiment, with nothing but his pay, a handsome face, and an extravagant disposition, I don't know. As for the *tiara*, I'm blown if they shall ever have that, for I told Blew before I came here to consider it his own property, till I told him to the contrary."

"But you were not the only security, were you?" asked Anne. "If there is another, you will only have to pay half."

"No," replied Sam, "there *is* another, for the fellow asked me to be 'one of two;' but suppose, as the major says, the other security has not got a sixpence to bless himself with. What then? Why, they can come down upon me for the whole of it. It's quite awful! It's the first bit of bad luck I have had since I have been possessed of the tiara. This is a bit of *George's* luck. Isn't it, George?"

Harroway became very uncomfortable, and began to abuse the country, and one of the table servants for no fault whatever.

Harroway was on duty that day, and he put on his uniform to go out. As he was brushing his whiskers, his eye caught sight of his flute, and he mechanically took it up, and while he was thinking of Sam's conversation, he attempted to sound it. But the instrument would not sound, and in a fit of rage, Harroway raised his strong arm and smashed it to pieces against the window sill, uttering, at the same time, some violent words; then, rushing down the stair-case, he proceeded to the men's barracks.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"WHAT on earth am I to do, Anne?" said Harroway to his wife, when he returned from duty. "I am in a great difficulty, and trust to you for the best advice."

"What difficulty?" she inquired.

"Why, the fact is, Anne," he continued, "I put my name to a piece of paper for that fellow of whom Sam spoke the other day, and the chances are that I shall have to pay for it."

"How very provoking!" she exclaimed. "Well, George, I did not think you could be so foolish. How came you to put your name to a paper?"

"That's more than I can tell you. The way he came over me was perfectly magical. It was at an auctioneer's show rooms. He came up, and told me a very amusing story, and two or three bits of scandal—admired the cut of this blouse, and declared it the most gentlemanlike thing he had ever seen—begged the loan of it as a pattern—slipt his arm through mine—asked me to do him a favour—walked me up to a desk—put a pen in my hand and a slip of paper—and before I had time to think of what I was doing, or make inquiry of him, he was possessed of my autograph; for I wrote 'G. Harroway, Lieut. H. M. — Regt.'"

"George! George! How could you be such a fool?" cried Anne.

"I tell you I don't know," he answered. "For his character, as far as money matters are concerned, was at the lowest ebb at the very time. He just wheedled me out of my name as you would wheedle a knife, or a piece of broken bottle, out of a young child's hand."

"But who is he?" she asked.

"Oh, he's a very well-known character. I met him at ———'s, and ———'s, and I once tiffed with him at Rosny's counting-house."

"And what may be the amount, pray, for which you have made yourself responsible?"

"Ah, dear! that is the worst part of it," said Harroway. "All I know is, that he got my signature at the foot of a blank slip of paper, and now that he has fled the country, I am pretty certain he made use of it."

Poor Anne became faint with anxiety. Had she known the worst, she could have faced it; but here was something hanging over them, and they knew not to what extent it would affect them in life, or character even.

Day followed day, and Harroway heard no tidings of his "autograph." They were beginning to hope and believe that it had not been made use of, or that George was known to have nothing, and was protected by his poverty from the pains of responsibility. But, alas! one morning he received the following letter from an agency house.

"Calcutta —

"DEAR SIR,—Your promissory note for Rs. 4500, at thirty days date, in favour of Mr. Quiekley, and by him indorsed to us, fell due yesterday. We shall feel obliged by your taking up the same with as little delay as possible.

"We remain, dear sir, yours faithfully,

"GROVILE & Co."

"Thank Heaven it is no worse!" cried Anne, as she saw George's jaw fall, after reading the above. "I declare to you, George, I am comparatively quite happy. It might have been ten times the amount."

"But how is it to be paid?" asked Harroway.

"Why, we must sell off all these useless things, and be contented with walking instead of riding."

"Well, but all these things have to be paid for, recollect."

"That is another matter; you must at once meet this debt you are called upon to pay. Let that Mr. Blew, who is always attending auctions and buying and selling, come and clear the rooms out and dispose of everything for what it will fetch; and you must go in person to these people, Grovile & Co., and say the affair shall be settled in a few days."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE household furniture, plate, glass, &c. &c., which Harroway fancied were perfect bargains—"dirt cheap"—sold for something less than half of the cost. As for the carriage and horses, and the Arab, the whole were knocked down for the price of the carriage alone. The proceeds were enough—barely enough—after deducting commission and so forth, to pay off the promissory note and the interest thereon. Sam, too, had a sale, but on a different principle to George's. He left *all* to Blew, and told him to do the best he could; and Blew wrote out a description of everything, and sent it round to all the residents of the Fort. They were informed that "those articles, the property of a distinguished field officer, were for disposal by private contract." The prices, which were double of what Sam had bid for them, were readily realized, and the amount handed over to him; but it did not suffice to meet his share of the 8000 rupees, which he had to pay for Mr. Quickley.

It was now to be considered how Harroway was to pay for the furniture. The sircars (clerks) were becoming troublesome, and the auctioneers began to write polite notes. Freeport also wanted money, and went over to the Harroways to have a consultation.

"I hear," said Sam, shutting his left eye, and looking very knowing out of the right, "that there is a bank that lends money on very moderate terms, and the best thing we could do, George, would be to have a 'dig' at it."

"What are the terms?" asked Anne.

"The terms are these," said Sam. "You must undertake to pay off so much a month, and get two fellows to be surety for you. Now, George, I have been surety for so many they will no doubt take me as a surety for *you*, and you can very easily get another, for there are lots of people of our acquaintance who are in the same sort of circumstances as ourselves, and would be glad of an exchange of names. You can, of course, be security for *me*. What amount do you want, George, eh?"

"I think about seven hundred pounds will do, Sam. Wont it, Anne?" asked George.

"About that sum," she answered, "or borrow an even six hundred, George. But how can you liquidate such an amount out of the savings of a subaltern's pay?"

"That's my look out," exclaimed Sam. "Aint I going to be his security? I'll take care that he pays it."

There was no other way of raising money, and money had to be raised. Anne, therefore, made no further remark.

"I think I will borrow one thousand pounds, while I am about it," said Sam, "and pay it off by instalments as soon as I can, or else I'll make my brothers liquidate it, just to make them bear their absent brother in mind; or, if my luck gets bad, sell the tiara."

These arrangements were agreed upon. The money was advanced with wonderful despatch, and Harroway, on the guarantee of Sam Freeport and a penniless lieutenant, undertook to pay off two hundred rupees (20*l.*) a month from his pay, leaving themselves something less than one hundred (10*l.*) a month to live upon. How it was managed it is almost impossible to understand, but not only did Harroway and his wife live within their very limited means, but they contrived to make a good appearance.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FREEPORT carried on in his usual way. He gave his quiet little parties, to which he asked the most extraordinary people that Calcutta could produce. His engagement with Miss Pannoety was for some weeks considered as "still pending," as the letter to Lord Hill was despatched, and every thing depended on the answer. But at last it was broken off in the following manner:—Mr. Pannoety fancied that his daughter was pining, and attributing it to the anxious state of her mind, in regard to the royal consent or refusal, he resolved to tempt Sam with a glorious offer, which was, that he, Freeport, should retire from the army, marry Clementina Georgina, join his father-in-law in business as a partner, and take a third of the profits, which were then very considerable.

As soon as Freeport received the letter which contained this offer, he laid it before his friend, Mrs. Harroway, for her advice. At the same time he expressed himself, in jest, disposed to join Pannoety.

"Don't think of it for one moment," said Anne.

"I think I must," said Sam. "She is not handsome, certainly; but look at the wealth."

"Be advised, and remain as you are," urged Anne.

"Well, but just compare the circumstances," he argued. "Here am I with the responsibility and bother of my company on my shoulders; obliged to be up at gun-fire; present every evening at four o'clock; whereas, if I was old Pannoety's partner, I should be literally rolling in wealth, and living in the lap of ease, comfort, luxury, and splendour."

"Nothing of the kind," said Anne. "Before a week had passed away, you would be wretched. Recollect how glad you were to return to the regiment from your open house in Portland Place."

"Ah, but I am older now," Sam remarked.

"Not at all," Anne returned. "You will be the same person that you are now, and were then, if you live to be a hundred years old."

"Very well, I suppose I must be guided by your advice," conceded Sam; "but how am I to answer him."

"Ask him if those are the only conditions on which he will consent to your marriage with his daughter; and if he says 'yes,' then beg to decline, and there will be an end of it."

Freeport did precisely as Anne suggested, and his engagement was soon at an end. In honour, or rather in celebration of the event, he gave a dinner party to a dozen friends. But the very next morning he made several visits, and fell desperately in love with a fair and pretty face, which caused him great uneasiness for many a long day.

The young lady to whom Freeport lost his heart had just arrived in India. She was gratified with the attention Sam paid her, and she grew to like him exceedingly. Mrs. Harroway had seen her, and pronounced her to be "a very nice person," which delighted Sam, and caused him to propose earlier than he otherwise intended. A more tender and touching epistle than the one he copied out of his book, could scarcely be conceived, and it carried the girl and her friends along with it, and gained for Sam the victory he so much desired. All was arranged, and on an early day Freeport was to lead the young lady to the altar. But, alas, for the mutability of human affairs!

Mrs. Rosny had never forgiven Freeport for marring the effect of her appearance at the fancy ball, and as soon as she heard that he had broken off the match with the brunette, Mrs. Rosny became curious to glean a few particulars, and she therefore called, for the second time in her life, on Miss Pannoety—who complained bitterly of Freeport's conduct, and called Sam a monster; and after a little she produced some of his letters.

"No one would believe a man could be so deceitful," exclaimed Mrs. Rosny.

"Indeed they could not," said the brunette.

"I wish you would allow me to show these letters to a friend of mine," said Mrs. Rosny.

"You may do what you please with them," said the brunette; "they are of no use to me now."

As soon as she was in possession of the packet, Mrs. Rosny hastened home to peruse its contents. She was edified and amused, and from excessive laughter she was compelled to stop reading for several minutes together. But this laughter did not compensate for his depriving her of George Harroway's conversation and attentions. When she thought of that, she was quite furious. Mrs. Rosny therefore enclosed a fair portion of Sam's impassioned letters to the brunette, and sent them anonymously to the young lady to whom he was about to be married. There could not be any doubt about the handwriting; it was recognised instantly as Freeport's. The style, too, was unmistakeable; and the bold impudence with which he had copied out stanza after stanza from various old authors—and addressed them as "lines to Clementina Georgina"—was peculiarly striking. The young lady showed these letters to her friends, and those friends would not hear of the match, to Sam's intense vexation and trouble. He shut himself up for a week, and kept his bed.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE Harroways continued to live very quietly and happily for several months, when there arose a new source of anxiety for Anne. A film

appeared over both of George's eyes, and there seemed to be doubts whether he would not entirely lose his sight. This lasted for about five weeks, and during that period Anne had not a good night's rest. She was almost afraid to hope, lest her hopes should be blighted. She watched him by night and by day, and when he was disposed to listen she would read to him until he fell asleep.

The film disappeared, and Harroway was himself again; but the mental anxiety, and bodily labour were too much for Anne's strength, and as soon as she knew her husband's sight was safe, she felt completely exhausted and unable to lift her head. She always endeavoured to raise a cheerful laugh, whenever George came to talk to her; but she frequently failed, and showed how weak she was by giving way to tears instead. A doctor who was called in recommended "Darjeeling" as the only possible cure; but, as Anne very truly remarked, "he might as well commend the moon; for although it might be all very well for people in poor Mr. Rosny's position to migrate from place to place, heedless of expense, yet it was not everybody that had the means of moving three or four hundred miles in this country."

But without "Darjeeling," Anne recovered, and set herself to bring up all arrears in her accounts. A few days after she was able to sit up, a home letter, from her father, was put into her hands. She trembled as she opened it, lest it should disclose some painful news. But it did not. On the contrary, it began by stating that "the money for purchase was deposited, and all was quite safe this time; that the aspect of affairs with him was very cheering; that he was overwhelmed just then with business, and could not write further."

"Now, mark my words," said Harroway. "There will never be a step in the corps so long as I stand first for purchase. It is very good and generous in the old man, to be sure, Anne; but such is the nature of our luck—a kindness is thrown away upon us."

The regiment was ordered to leave Calcutta, and proceed to a station some distance in the interior. Harroway obtained leave to remain behind for a month—as they thought it would be better to proceed alone than in company with the corps. When the month—a very tedious one to them—had passed away, a budgerow (large boat) was hired, and the Harroways embarked for their destination. It was at about the end of the cold weather; the change of scene and the quiet of the boat were extremely grateful to them, and they felt happier than they had been for some time past. Harroway had taken charge of a valuable double barrelled gun for a friend, and when they anchored for the evening, he amused himself and his wife by going on shore, and shooting whatever was deemed worthy of powder and shot. In the morning they watched the natives catch the fish, and when they were on their journey, they would sit aloft—Anne sketching the various places they passed, while Harroway read aloud to her. They were so comfortable, and so contented with the life they then led, that they could have wished that the journey was twice the distance. At length they were within one day's run of the station they were ordered to, and everything was carefully put up for removal from the boat, as soon as they landed.

There was a sunken log off Patna, some few years ago, which was fatal to very many boats, and to some of their passengers; and the evil

genius that pursued the Harroways run their budgerow so completely across this log that the action of the stream capsized her. They had just time to get into the cooking boat, when the budgerow was forced into the deep water, where she went down. Harroway and his wife stood upon the bank, watching, in mute astonishment, the place where the waters had swallowed up all that they had in the world.

"When is this luck to end?" said George, despondingly.

"I think, dear, it must have ended now," cried Anne. "If it had not, one of us would have been drowned. As it is, we are spared to each other, and in good health. Really, George, dearest, we ought to be thankful for that."

"That's *one* way of looking at it, certainly," said George.

"And it is the only one, depend on't," she laughed.

* * * * *

At Patna they received great kindness and attention from the principal authority present, and in the evening they were forwarded on to Dinapore in an easy carriage, and conducted to Captain Freeport's bungalow.

"Why, what's the meaning of all this?" cried Sam, when he heard their voices. "I have been down at the ghaut all the evening, straining my eyes looking for your boat, and Blew is down there now, waiting for you."

"We landed at Patna," said Anne.

"What made you do that?" asked Sam.

"We couldn't help ourselves," replied Harroway.

"Why, how's that?" questioned Sam.

"The boat went down, and was lost," cried Anne.

"Well, by Jove!" ejaculated Sam, "I never knew such people in my life! Never mind—you will have a run of good luck yet, George. It is impossible that this can last. Make yourselves as comfortable as possible to-night, and to-morrow we will devise means for the future. You had better remain in this place, and I will go and take up my quarters with some one else."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE following morning, at breakfast, Blew brought in Freeport's letters—at least a dozen. Sam opened them, made himself acquainted with the contents, and then commented thereon. There was a dun from the bank, for a monthly instalment; there was a request, on the part of a wine, beer, and cheroot merchant, that a remittance might be made; there was a small account for patent leather boots; there was a letter from a friend, giving him a true account of his last love's looks, and promising to ascertain, if possible, whether she relented, and whether there was a chance of his gaining his heart's most earnest wish; then came a bill for ices and soda-water; and several pretty little letters from ladies, who kept him informed of all the gossip of Calcutta. To each and every of these epistles, he replied in a characteristic strain. But that to the wine, beer, and cheroot merchant's address must be here given, as a specimen of Freeport's business correspondence:—

"DEAR SIR—I am in receipt of your favour, requesting a remittance, and have the pleasure to enclose you an order for fifty rupees—the

balance shall be forthcoming on an early day. You will oblige me by requesting your people to send me another batch of cheroots—exactly like the last; and, if it would not put you to too much trouble, I should like you to procure for me four or five very superior cricket bats, and half a dozen balls, and a few packs of playing cards. You will be glad to hear that the troops, both European and native, in this station, enjoy the most perfect health, and, from various inquiries made in the district, I am happy to state that a most abundant harvest may be expected. The indigo crops are promising, and the fertility generally is beyond description. Several accidents have of late taken place on the river; but though the sacrifice of property has been great, no lives have been lost. The weather is still delightful, although the middle of the days is somewhat too warm to be pleasant.

With reference to the playing cards, I should like them to have enamelled backs. Those that are not enamelled, are very unpleasant to deal, after they are a little used.

“Believe me, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

“SAM. FREEPORT.”

Harroway and Anne laughed loudly when Sam read the above to them. He had never been out of cantonments, and he was quite ignorant of the health of the troops generally, and of the state of the crops; but as he said himself, “What can it signify? I wish to be civil and polite, and as long as I say something on these matters, why the object is effected.”

But what was their amusement when they saw the substance of Sam’s information embodied as a leader in one of the Calcutta daily newspapers!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

“THIS is what I call living very mildly,” observed Harroway to his wife, one morning; “this is cantonment life in the East.”

“Why, George, if we do not live very mildly, we can never meet our engagements,” she replied; “and remember, that to be dunned is more than you can bear.”

“But then I want to see the people, and *know* them,” returned Harroway. “What say you, shall I conform to the custom of the country, and make a round of calls? I confess I always fancy one looks like a hungry wolf prowling about in search of dinners; but it must be done.”

“Indeed not, George,” she urged; “we cannot afford to entertain, and therefore I think we had much better stay at home.”

Harroway gave in, and in accordance with his wife’s desire he called upon no one in the station. Many persons set them down as very odd people; others fancied that they gave themselves airs; others declared they were probably saving money and stingy; others surmised that Harroway had been promoted from the ranks, and that his wife did not feel at home in society, and therefore shunned it; while a few scandal-creating creatures hinted that there were some queer stories about them.

There was a cricket match played one Thursday forenoon, and George Harroway was one of an eleven. He made a very good score, and when he carried his hat off the field, he was complimented by the lookers-on,

who sat beneath the shade of the tent. A middle-aged gentleman, whom Harroway had not seen before, opened a conversation with him, and George invited him to dine at the mess that evening, and the invitation was accepted.

It happened that on the evening in question there was a very large dinner party at the house of the officer commanding the station, and all the married people of Harroway's corps, himself and his wife excepted, formed a part of the company.

The wife of Harroway's guest was one of the most mischievous tattlers that ever set folk by the ears. She was very fond of putting this and that together, like the servant-maid in the play, and then arriving at a conclusion, which was unalterable. She was now perfectly satisfied and convinced that when the ladies of the regiment spoke of the Harroways as "unfortunate people," they did not use the word "wicked" out of mere charity. "I don't mean to say," she reasoned with her husband, "that they are not man and wife *now*; but take my word for it, Major Goggleheigh——" (She had a way of tossing her head instead of finishing her malicious sentences.)

The imputation flew with a rapidity which was almost incredible, and talking about the really unfortunate and unoffending couple soon became a means with many of beguiling some portion of the tedious hours of the hot weather.

One evening Sam Freeport walked down to the ghaut, as was his custom whenever a steamer arrived, to make the acquaintance of new arrivals, and on the way back he was accompanied by a steady-going officer, then commanding the wing of a regiment of native infantry. Harroway's name was incidentally mentioned, and the "queer story" was alluded to. Freeport was seldom seen in a passion, or even ruffled in temper; but on hearing so vile and false an insinuation directed against a man to whom he had been under numberless obligations in bygone times, and against a woman whom he regarded, and truly, as a paragon of virtue, and all else that exalts the female character, his reason seemed suddenly to forsake him, and it was with great difficulty he refrained from breaking his walking stick over the head of the man whose lips had repeated so shameful a rumour.

As soon as he could speak, Freeport demanded the authority. The officer said that he did not remember any person in particular who mentioned it, but that the circumstance was very commonly talked about. This enraged Freeport more than ever, and he swore that he would never rest till he found out the guilty persons, and punished them. He sought the colonel, who expressed his extreme sorrow, and promised to do all in his power to set the matter at rest. But this did not satisfy Freeport. He called upon every one, out of his corps, with whom he was intimate, and questioned them closely. At length he traced the offence to the Goggleheighs, and to the major's house he proceeded in haste and anger. There was considerable shuffling and evasion, which Sam was not disposed to let pass without lengthy comment and severe reproach. He demanded in writing an admission of the error, and an expression of sorrow on the major's part; and his demand was complied with.

Freeport debated with himself whether he would be justified or not in withholding from Harroway what had come to his knowledge. There was a good deal in favour of his putting Harroway

in possession of the facts, and, on the other hand, there was a good deal against his adopting such a course. At length he tested the propriety of his measures by asking himself whether,—if it were his own case,—whether, if he stood in Harroway's position, he would like to be informed, or kept in ignorance of what had been said, and what was probably still believed beyond the precincts of the station? The result of his deliberation was this: he walked to Harroway's poor abode, took George aside, and simply stated all that had taken place. Harroway's eyes flashed fire, his lips quivered, he clenched his fists, and his face was overspread with paleness, induced by the violence of his passion.

Harroway promised Freeport faithfully that he would not be guilty of impropriety, and that he would look upon Major Goggleheigh's apology as sufficient; and no doubt he was at the time quite sincere: but, alas! his own ill-luck threw him, a few days afterwards, and before his wrath had subsided, into the company of the very man whom of all others it were well that he should avoid.

There was another cricket-match, and Harroway went in, determined to make "no end of a score." The cricket-ground was in sight of Harroway's bungalow, and Anne had borrowed an opera-glass (from the major's wife) to see "dear George's beautiful batting," of which, by the way, she used to talk a great deal, whenever she wanted to make him on good terms with himself. *The very first ball put George Harroway out!*

The other side, and their backers, raised a hearty cheer, which was succeeded by screams and loud huzzas, and several very enthusiastic persons jumped about like cannibals, and then threw themselves down on the ground and laughed more like maniacs than reasonable men. The "fun" was enormous, though the wit, perhaps, was very much out of proportion. Harroway could neither understand nor believe that the ball touched the middle stump, albeit there it was, stretched at full length on the field. His astonishment redoubled the shouts, for he had been heard to say, "I'll go in first, and see the other ten out." As he walked to the tent, Harroway looked towards his bungalow, and thought how dreadfully annoyed poor Anne would be when she heard those cheers which proclaimed his defeat, and reflected that the corps had not a ghost of a chance since he was unable to score a notch. He was correct in supposing Anne was annoyed, for she shed tears, not for the corps' disappointment, but because she knew how hurt George would be when he saw the round "O" opposite to "Harroway" in the printed report of the match in the newspapers.

The first person who accosted Harroway when he reached the tent was Major Goggleheigh. "You are not so fortunate to-day, Mr. Harroway," said he, with an unmeaning and would-be-kind snuggle. Harroway dropped his bat, walked up to Major Goggleheigh, and replied, "By heavens! Sir, if ever you dare speak to me again, I'll—I'll——" Here he raised his clenched fist to a level with his chest, whereupon a young ensign—a very knowing boy, of his regiment—rushed up, and placing his arm round the infuriated man's waist, he led him, as he would lead a child, away from the dangerous vicinity. By the time he was led back to the tent, Major Goggleheigh had taken his departure.

CHAPTER XXXV.

WHEN Harroway got home his wife condoled with him, but attempted to laugh off the misfortune of being put out by the first ball. She thought he was very foolish to think so much about such a trifle, and could not comprehend how it could make so deep an impression upon his spirits. He never spoke a word the whole evening, and was extremely cross. There was another circumstance that puzzled Anne.

Sam Freeport came to the house, looking unusually lugubrious, and took George into the verandah, where she heard George emphatically declare, "*I don't care one ——. I'd do it again.*" Anne began to imagine George had been foolish enough to bet larger sums than he had been able to pay, on his own powers at cricket. This suspicion harassed her, and she was almost driven to distraction. When they returned to the room, Harroway asked Freeport to take a cheroot and a glass of brandy and water; but, for the first time in the recollection of Anne, Sam made some excuse, and sorrowfully took leave.

"What is the matter with you, George?" Anne inquired.

"Nothing in the world," said Harroway. "Why do you ask that?"

"Because you appear disturbed."

"I am no more disturbed than you are, nor half so much."

"Well, I am very glad to hear it, George; I thought you were annoyed at being put out so early to-day."

"Then, if you thought that, why did you ask what was the matter with me?"

Anne retired, and left her husband alone. He paced the room till a very late hour, talking to himself, and when he was tired out, threw himself into the easy chair, and fell asleep.

The next morning the major called at Harroway's quarters, and asked the servants if their master had risen. The servants said "No," which was the case. The major used occasionally to look in after parade, to have a gossip with the Harroways, and when Anne heard his voice, she went out into the sitting-room to receive him, and ordered coffee.

"What has become of Harroway this morning?" asked the major.

"He sat up very late last night, and he is tired," replied Anne, and she called out, "George, don't be lazy! Here is the major!"

Harroway made no reply.

An hour passed away in a confused conversation, both on the part of the major and Mrs. Harroway. The former had a painful duty to perform, and the latter saw that there was some unpleasantness at hand, though she had no idea of what it could be.

It was getting late, and high time for the major to go home for breakfast, but Harroway did not make his appearance. George pretended to be asleep, and was deaf to the numerous calls of his wife.

"I must see George," said the major. "Make him get up."

Anne went into his room and aroused Harroway from his reverie. He pronounced it a great bore to be disturbed in that way, but after making a hasty toilet he came out.

The meeting was a very awkward one on the major's part. He had known Harroway as a mere boy, and had always liked him; and for Mrs. Harroway he had the highest regard and esteem.

Anne saw that the major wished to say something to her husband in private, and she therefore left the room.

"How could you have been so mad as to raise your hand to that man, George?" said the major.

"I know not," Harroway answered. "I have borne him a resentment, and he spoke to me and grinned, when I was recently annoyed by another matter of trifling import."

"The fact is," said the major, "you have exposed yourself to be tried."

"I cannot help it," sighed Harroway. "Has anything been done in the business?"

"Yes; and I am grieved to say, George, I am now present to place you under an arrest."

After a silence of some minutes, Harroway went into his dressing-room and brought out his sword, which the major took away with him.

Anne could not comprehend these mysterious proceedings, and she was fearful of questioning her husband in his present state of temper. It was not long, however, before he made her acquainted with his position, and the probable consequences of his rashness. The announcement amazed her, but she did not reprove him for what seemed beyond remedy. She was grieved that upon so small a provocation (for Harroway had never informed her of the first cause) her husband could resort to so violent an act; and those who were equally ignorant with herself regarded him as insane. Freeport, who was a perfect creature of hope, thought that nothing more than a severe reprimand from supreme authority would be the result. Harroway, on the other hand, who was a creature of despair, predicted that he would be *cashiered*. Anne knew not what to think, and none of her acquaintances could help her to an idea. All doubt, however, was speedily set aside by a communication from head quarters, to the effect that a general court-martial was to be assembled for Lieutenant Harroway's trial.

Now that she was no longer in suspense, but informed of the worst, Anne set herself to consider how her husband could best defend himself. Harroway then deemed it his duty, and only just to himself, to assure her that the remark on the cricket ground was not the provocation he received, but that it merely afforded an opportunity of resenting in person the insult and the wrong of which he then apprized her.

Unfortunately for them, the very persons whom they most wished to advise with were members of the court, namely, the major and Sam Freeport, and they, of course, kept aloof.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE day for the trial arrived, and George Harroway stood charged with "conduct unbecoming the character of an officer, in having, at ———, on the ——— day of ———, 18—, raised his hand in a menacing manner against Major Goggleheigh, of the ——— Regt., and uttered, at the same time, threatening words."

There could be no doubt as to George Harroway's guilt. All he desired was to bring before the tribunal the fact of having been deeply injured by Major Goggleheigh, and being accosted by him when he had

just suffered a disappointment. He desired this, in the hope of modifying the opinion of the court as to the heinousness of the offence in a military point of view. To effect this object, he put a question to Major Goggleleigh, when one of the members (who, by the way, had read a great deal of military law, but who was utterly ignorant of its principles, or even the power of words) suggested that George's question was a leading one, and quoted Hough to support his dictum, that "such questions could not be allowed."

There seemed to be a difference of opinion on this knotty point, and the court was "cleared" in consequence.

While Harroway was cooling his heels outside the court, he could not help expatiating with the adjutant on the absurdity and the injustice of his being excluded from the discussion; and there certainly appeared to be a good deal of truth and common sense in his remarks.

The court, after half an hour's deliberation—(if fourteen men, including the Deputy Judge Advocate General, all talking together on a point of which two thirds of the number had not the least glimmering of an idea—can be called "deliberating,") was opened, and the prisoner was informed that the question was considered "irrelevant." Harroway then proposed another, when the member who was well read in Hough and Simmonds instantly suggested that "the court had met to try the prisoner, and not Major Goggleleigh."

"There can be no doubt about *that*," said Sam Freeport, drily. "Nevertheless, I can't see why Major Goggleleigh should not say whether or not he had lately repeated matters in public to the prisoner's prejudice."

"I don't see that at all," replied the objector. "It is clearly laid down in *Simm—*"

"Clear the court!" cried another member, in a loud voice, which startled the president, and the court was cleared accordingly.

The president had never been on any court martial before. From his boyhood upwards, till he attained his majority, he had been on staff employ, and since then it had been his good fortune never to be called upon to perform such disagreeable duty. He had not the most remote idea of the principles or the rules of evidence, and (poor man!) throughout the whole trial he appeared far more frightened and embarrassed than the prisoner. His inward prayer was, evidently, that he might never be called upon to give his casting vote on any question.

The debate was a stormy one—and Harroway and the adjutant could almost hear the words of several of the members. The Deputy Judge Advocate's voice had been overwhelmed in the cross fire that was kept up between "the well-read man" and Sam Freeport, and the commentaries from all quarters (except from the president's quarter) which their respective observations elicited. The tumult in about twenty minutes dwindled to a calm, and the fact of "the court's open" was duly announced by the junior member. "The well-read man," by quoting the authorities (which, by the bye, had no bearing on the point at issue), carried the day against the common-sense view of Sam

Freeport, and the prisoner was informed that his second question could not be allowed.

It is not an easy matter for a man, who is unused to interrogation, to frame questions under favourable circumstances; but when the natural difficulty is increased by artificial means, the case becomes desperate. Harroway then wished to know whether the witness could in any way account for what must have appeared to him a very unwarrantable outrage—without reference to the cricket match.

The well-read man instantly suggested that the witness could only answer that question from hearsay, and hearsay evidence was inadmissible.

"Not at all," cried several members with reference to the witness's ability to speak from personal knowledge.

"Then I'll show it to you very clearly laid down," responded "the well-read man"—"with reference to the law;" and he forthwith dipped into Kennedy.

The well-read man had the reputation of being a very clever fellow, and when he read aloud the trite truth—a great admirer of his exclaimed: "Sure enough. There it is. He is quite right!"

A murmuring ensued. The president looked to the right and left, in a painful state of dubitation, until "Clear the court" was resounded—when the prisoner and the adjutant left the room for the third time.

"They are continually clearing the court," remarked Harroway, when he got outside, "but hang me if it does not seem to be muddier and muddier after every clearance!"

The Deputy Judge Advocate having obtained a patient hearing on this occasion, he pointed out very clearly, that there was not the slightest objection to any of the questions put by the prisoner, whereupon "the well-read man" reminded the D. J. A. G. that it was not very respectful to the court to pronounce an opinion on questions which the court had solemnly decided, and the majority of the members concurring in this view, the D. J. A. G. was requested to be more guarded in future.

The D. J. A. G. was a new hand—lately appointed to the department—and smarting under the rebuke, he maintained silence during the subsequent discussions. The third question was then thrown overboard, and the court was opened once more.

Harroway had about him the very apology which Major Goggleleigh had given to Freeport; but Anne had prudently advised him not to produce it, except for the purpose of contradicting Major Goggleleigh, if he deposed to no knowledge of former provocation. Feeling himself, however, at an utter loss as to the means of bringing his point forward, he produced the apology, and requested that Major Goggleleigh might be asked whether or not it was in his handwriting?

The well-read man (Heaven save us from such men!) intimated to the court that "before *documentary evidence* (!) could be received, it was necessary that the court should know what was its nature, in order that the court might judge as to the propriety of making it a matter of record or not."

The murmur which commonly precedes the opening of a discussion had just commenced, when Harroway, in a firm and respectful tone thus addressed the president: "I remember, sir, about four years ago,

being present at a famous trial in the Court of Queen's Bench. The witness deposed to certain facts which were not in accordance with what he had stated in a letter, and the counsel, who was examining the witness, doubled up the letter in such a way that the words, 'yours very truly,' and the signature could only be seen, and then he asked him whether the handwriting was his or not. The witness owned it, and the letter was then read out in court. Now, sir, if that was irregular, I think it would not have been allowed."

The president breathed hard, and looked straight before him—(oh! such a vacant look!)

"Have you any report of that case? Can you mention any book where it is to be found?" inquired the well-read man.

"I have not," replied Harroway.

"Then," said the well-read man, looking round the court with an air of triumph, occasioned by a consciousness of his own sagacity, "then, I am afraid the court would not be justified in trusting to the prisoner's memory, especially when Hough speaks so plainly as he does."

"What Hough is that?" asked Sam.

"The major!" replied the well-read man, proudly.

"I wouldn't place much reliance on *his* opinions," observed Sam. "As for the case alluded to by the prisoner, I remember it well. I was present at the time."

"*With* the prisoner, perhaps?" suggested the well-read man.

"Yes, sir, *with* the prisoner."

"Clear the court!" cried the president, for the want of something else to say—and the court was cleared accordingly.

"Well, if military law is not a perfect farce," exclaimed Harroway, "all I can say is, that it is very like one."

"It is like most human institutions, my good fellow," remarked the adjutant, who was a shrewd man, "it is open to be greatly abused by an indiscriminate selection of those who are eligible by rank (though not qualified) to dispense the duties entrusted to them."

"Oh! hang your philosophy!" remarked Harroway, laughing. "I'm a *practical* man, my dear sir."

"The court's adjourned till to-morrow!" cried out the junior member. "Come in!"

"The case ought to have been settled in an hour," muttered Harroway. "Confound your human institutions, say I. I only wish they were a little more humane, and not so trying to the temper!"

* * * * *

Harroway related to his wife all that he could remember of the day's proceedings. She was not well pleased; for it seemed to her that the majority of votes, which prevented him putting such reasonable questions, would carry a verdict and severe sentence against him. She therefore modified his defence very considerably, and directed the appeal more to the passions than to the reason of the tribunal. As far as Harroway could judge, he thought there were nine against him, and four favourably disposed. They talked over what they might do, if the worst came to the worst, and although Anne put a very bright face upon their prospects, in good truth they were far from cheering.

While Harroway and Anne were debating about what might be done

in the event of his being cashiered, a very different scene was being enacted at the house of the president, who had a dinner party on that evening, to which Sam Freeport had been invited. The president took Sam into a corner of the drawing room, and reverted to the court martial, while a young lady was squalling away at the piano—

“A place in thy memory, dearest,
Is all that I claim;
To pause, and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.”

“What do you think of this business?” asked the president.

“I only hope,” said Sam, “they don’t publish the reports of courts martial in this country.”

“No; they don’t,” said the president. “But why?”

“Because,” said Sam, “they will take us to be a parcel of born idiots. I don’t like to tell you what is generally said—but really—oh!—How very nicely this young lady sings!”

“Never mind the singing,” said the president, in great anxiety. “What do they say?”

“I don’t like to tell you,” said Sam. “’Pon my word, how beautifully she touches her instrument; and, except Persiani, I never knew a woman who had her execution of voice.”

“Never mind her voice,” said the imbecile president of the general court martial; “tell me what they say?”

“Then it must be in strict confidence,” said Sam, looking as grave as possible.

“Oh, in *strict* confidence,” said the agitated old man.

“Well,” whispered Sam, “they say—mind you, they say, but *I* don’t—they say that when the commander-in-chief comes to read the whole affair, he will give us all a most owdacious wiggling; and as for you, he’ll make you an invalid.”

“God bless me, you don’t say so!” responded the president. “Why, I should only draw 900 Rs. (90%) a month, and perhaps get a mere nothing for retiring?”

“I don’t know what you will draw,” said Sam. “I only tell you what people say.”

“How could it be averted?” asked the president.

“Why, by taking a firm line,” replied Sam. “By exercising your authority, and putting a stop to a parcel of ridiculous discussions and forecastle quibbles, which will bring the whole of us into disgrace, and make us marked men for life.”

“But how can I do it?” said the president.

“Why, by suubbing the first man that makes ridiculous objections. But, recollect, you must be firm,” said Sam.

“Oh, I’ll be firm!” said the president. “Yes, you are quite right—I’ll be firm. I don’t want firmness.”

“I know you don’t,” quoth Sam. “But what I desire is to see you exercise it.”

“The invalids?” soliloquized the president, in Sam’s presence and hearing. “The invalids? I’ll write to my friend, the adjutant-general, to-morrow, and tell him I am suffering acutely from *tic douloureux*.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

On the second day of the trial, a change came over the spirit of the court. The prisoner was allowed to put whatever questions he pleased, and the well-read man was in a minority on all the points he mooted. The president was not so firm as might have been expected from his promise; still, his fears of being invalidated for imbecility awakened him to a sense of his authority, and he tore up all the slips of paper which the well-read man threw across the table, without looking at the observations thereon written. The proceedings were at length closed, the verdict found, the punishment awarded, and the packet despatched to the supreme authority, for confirmation or otherwise. Harroway made up his mind that his commission was gone; but his wife had a presentiment that nothing so calamitous as that would happen to them. Twenty-five tedious days passed away, and the Harroways were hourly expecting their doom. At about two o'clock one morning, Sam Freeport's voice was heard in the verandah. He was shouting out, "Bearer, open the dur-wazy (door)—quick, you!" Harroway got up, and welcomed his old friend warmly, although he believed him to be the harbinger of bad news.

"Here's a pretty business," said Sam.

Harroway was afraid to inquire.

"Just what I expected!" Sam continued. "They made a mess of it, and you are all right!"

What a relief was that sentence to the mind of Harroway, and to the mind of his wife, who was listening on tip-toe at the door.

Anne dressed hastily, and went out to hear the particulars, which Sam declared to be these:

"The court," said he, "found you guilty, and sentenced you to be placed at the bottom of the list of the lieutenants; but the commander-in-chief is of opinion that you ought to have been *cashiered*, and therefore he has not approved of the sentence given by the court, and you are therefore to be released from arrest, and ordered to return to your duty. The colonel has this in a private letter. The general order will not be here for the next five days."

"How very fortunate!" exclaimed Anne.

"You may well say that," returned Sam; "but it is just my luck that befriended him. If I had not got that apology from old Goggleheigh, you could never have produced it, and then your case would have been better than it was, and the loss of rank sufficient; for, don't you see, George, that after accepting an apology, your conduct was the less excusable; and this view has doubtless been taken at head quarters. I hope it will teach you a lesson to be more careful in future. Let us have some brandy and water. It is of no use going to bed now, as I must be up for parade in a couple of hours."

They sat talking till the day dawned. Freeport was as happy at the result as were the Harroways themselves; and most heartily did he make them laugh by his imitation of the president, and various other members of the court martial.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

FREEPORT was now put to his wits end to ward off the importunity of his creditors. He had to sell everything he possessed to meet trifling debts and pay his servants. Instalment after instalment remained unpaid to the bank, and the secretary was beginning to grow weary of receiving very lengthy letters about everything but the payment of what was due and owing. It is true, Sam sometimes alluded to it in a P.S., but not often. Harroway had been applied to on Sam's account; and he told the truth—namely, that he had paid, and would pay his own debt; but that it was entirely out of his power to meet the engagement entered into for his friend.

Freeport was then threatened with an action; but he remonstrated against so harsh and arbitrary a proceeding in such warm, or rather such cool terms, and recommended patience, so forcibly, as the quickest way to get paid all, that his epistle had a marked effect. He then took it into his head to bore the bank for an additional loan; and his correspondence with the secretary was becoming so bulky and unprofitable, that it was deemed advisable to let Captain Freeport alone, and say nothing about the original debt, at least for the time being; and that was all Freeport wanted.

It was resolved at last to sue Sam for the amount of his balance—some nine thousand rupees; and a writ of summons was accordingly served upon him. He caused the document to be framed and glazed, and had it hung up amongst his pictures, resting assured they would never go to such lengths as they threatened. But he was disappointed. One evening, on going down to the ghaut to meet the steamer, he met a Calcutta bailiff, who instantly made his acquaintance.

"You don't mean to say," said Sam, in an expostulatory attitude, and putting his hat well on one side, while he whiffed away at his cheroot—"you don't mean to say you have arrested me?"

"I must do my duty, sir," observed the bailiff.

"Of course you must," said Sam; "England expects that every man will do his duty. Of course you must. Well, my good sir, how shall we travel? The prospect of meeting my old friends in Calcutta delights me. Shall we go by land, or by water? I hope you are well provided with money to defray our expenses; for, as you may reasonably suppose, I am very hard up, indeed."

"I think, sir, we had better go down by the steamer, sir," responded the bailiff. "They tell me, sir, there will be a downward boat the day after to-morrow."

"I am agreeable to anything," said Sam. "Meanwhile, come away to my quarters."

As they proceeded to Sam's bungalow, Sam asked the bailiff an infinity of questions on various topics. The trip from Calcutta; the fare on board the flats; the temperature on the river; the healthy condition, or otherwise, of the metropolis, &c. &c. &c.

"Have a glass of Madeira and a biscuit," said Sam, when they entered the bungalow.

The bailiff thanked him.

"Look here," whispered Sam, extending his eyelids; "I shouldn't

like it known just yet that I am arrested; for it is very probable that I may be able to arrange it in the course of to-morrow, or next day; and I have a few friends coming to take a quiet dinner this evening, and play a rubber of whist. Couldn't you put on a frog coat, and a stock, and come out as a military man, just for a day or so, or until we go away together?"

The bailiff smiled, and Freeport continued:

"Oh, of course you can. Come in here, and I'll rig you out. Be reserved, and say as little as possible."

Freeport had taken charge of a host of things belonging to an old friend of his, in the 3rd Dragoons, and amongst them was a frogged coat, an undress cap, and other articles of uniform.

Having dressed the bailiff up, he gave him the name of his friend, "Captain Drones, of the 3rd Dragoons."

The bailiff gave Freeport to understand that he couldn't allow him out of his sight; but upon Sam's word of honour that he would never think of an "escape," or anything of the sort, the restriction was taken off, and a mutual understanding arrived at. Freeport, in the meanwhile, wrote a letter to the doctor, and begged to be placed on the sick-list for a few days, as he had a violent bleeding at the nose, which was always increased by the sound of musketry.

The evening came, and Freeport's guests dropped in one by one, and were respectively introduced to his friend, "Captain Drones." The dinner was placed on the table, and the bailiff took his seat on the host's right hand. Sam wanted to fill him with wine, but the bailiff was cautious and abstemious. Sam was frequently observed to laugh—at nothing, seemingly—but the party assembled little dreamt of what was passing through his brain, and what intense fun it was to him to reflect on "how deuced well the man looked in decent uniform."

When the dinner was over, Blew ran out the card tables; and while he was doing so, George Harroway remarked to Freeport, that Drones was a very mild sort of fellow.

"Ah! poor fellow," said Sam. "He has a good deal on his mind at present. The fact is, he is not himself, George. A better hearted fellow never existed. The more you know him, the more you will like him. He is a very reserved and haughty man; he always was; but it wears off in time. Just let me ask him if he will cut in."

Freeport glided across the room, and inquired of the bailiff if he would have a hand at cards? The bailiff had not the slightest objection, for he was fond of whist, and played remarkably well. It was his good fortune to be the major's partner, and they scored up a heavy rubber against Sam and George Harroway.

"I say, old Drones," said Sam to the bailiff, "by Jove, if you go on in this way, blow me if you will ever get paid. Recollect, you have a horrid bad prospect before you. Eh, old boy? Drink a glass of Madeira."

The bailiff loosened his stock and chuckled in a manner which made Sam Freeport laugh so uproariously he could not pour out the wine without spilling it over the counters.

It is extraordinary how prepossessed some men become with others with whom they win money at cards, or any other game of chance. The major grew to like Drones, and thought him a very amiable person. He looked over the defect in Drones' pronunciation of the English language,

and regarded his dropping the letter "h" rather as a misfortune than a fault.

"Don't you see a great difference, Captain Drones, in Sam?" asked Harroway, with a view to tease Freeport. "Has he not aged awfully?"

"Not a bit of it," answered Sam. "Am I, Drones? Eh? Play away, old boy. A club led. Aged! Not a bit of it. I'm as young as ever. Aint I, Drones?"

"I don't see much difference," said the bailiff.

"Of course you don't," continued Sam. "Who ever did? Play away! Singing, 'Ring a ting ting a ting tong, this world it runs round upon wheels.' I say, Drones, don't look over my hand. It's a d——d bad habit you have contracted since we played together last."

The bailiff denied the charge in a very serious manner; so much so, that the major and Harroway mistook the man's nature for an inimitable display of humour, and they began to laugh loudly, an amusement in which Sam Freeport heartily joined.

"Come over and breakfast with us to-morrow morning," said the major to Freeport.

"I am afraid we can't do that," Sam replied, "for Drones has some business to settle with Smyth, and I am going to take him down in the morning."

"Then come and take a quiet dinner with us," said Harroway, "and we will have a rubber afterwards."

"I am afraid we can't do that either," said Sam, "for reasons which I will explain to you by and bye.—What's that? A heart? I've got none. There's a trump. Take it up, George. There's another!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"**DRONES! Drones! Derrick Drones!**" pondered Anne, when Harroway informed her of the name of Freeport's guest. "Why, George, that must be the man of whom Freeport tells so many good stories."

"To tell you the truth, I thought him dull," replied Harroway. "But then Sam says he is not himself just now."

"According to Freeport's description, he must be a man of infinite humour, and I have some curiosity to see him. He has only one eye. Has he not?"

"No. He has as many eyes as I have. What made you think that?" asked Harroway.

"Because I am convinced Sam has told me that his friend had the misfortune to lose an eye. Are you sure, George?"

"Sure! Why, you cannot suppose I would be mistaken on a point like that? I am not blind of either of my eyes, thank heavens!"

Now this was one of those points which Anne never would give up. All that Freeport had told her of Drones she remembered, and amongst other things, that he had but one eye. She therefore reverted to the question, and caused Harroway to be vexed.

"I tell you what it is," he exclaimed, "the man has most perfect sight, and that's enough. Say no more about it."

"But really, George, it is so provoking to be contradicted on a matter

of which I am so certain. It is not impossible for you to be mistaken. What could have induced Freeport to describe a man as blind of one eye, if he had perfect sight?"

"Very well; have it so!" murmured Harroway. "Have it so: but I am quite prepared to swear the contrary of your view. There let it rest. I shall say no more about it." And thereupon, after the fashion of most persons who make similar declarations, he began a long harangue on the obstinacy and positiveness of the female character.

Anne retaliated, and the dispute was not likely to be closed that night; for both parties were perfectly satisfied that the other was wrong. To put an end to the matter, and to show his wife the absurdity of pitting hearsay against sight, he wrote the following note to Freeport, and despatched it at once:—"My dear Sam,—Has your friend Derrick Drones one eye or two? Yours, G. H." To this Freeport replied,—

"Only one: but keep it secret. How came you to guess, eh?"

"This is more than I can understand, Anne," exclaimed Harroway, when the reply came back. "It seems you are right, after all. But I would not hesitate to take my oath this moment that he has two eyes. To me it is inexplicable how there could be any difference on such a point."

* * * * *

Sam introduced the bailiff to every one who called upon him, and three days passed over without any negotiation respecting the debt. He had just made up his mind to obtain a month's leave on very urgent private affairs, when it struck Sam that he might pledge the tiara of diamonds, and raise the money from a wealthy merchant in the station, when, to his intense joy and satisfaction, he received a letter from his brother, containing a bill upon a mercantile house in Calcutta for one thousand pounds. Sam had no difficulty in discounting this bill at twelve per cent., and two and a half commission; and the bailiff being "satisfied," he embarked on a downward boat, and returned to the City of Palaces.

CHAPTER XL.

THE mail which brought Freeport the means of paying his heaviest debt, brought the Harroways a very odd letter from old Newsham. It was incoherent in some parts and indefinite in others; but the strain throughout was wild, joyous, and light-hearted. Still it did not afford Anne much happiness, for she feared her father was engaged in some rash and glowing speculation, which would reduce him a second time to poverty, and make him, perhaps for ever, the inhabitant of a prison. Harroway did not view it in this light, thinking that it augured a certain fortune, in which they would share, eventually.

The Sonopore race meeting was about to take place, and Freeport proposed that the Harroways should go. Anne objected on the ground of expense, but George over-ruled the objection, and bade her make ready.

They had never before seen so many persons, all known to each other, encamped together. The novelty of the scene rendered it pleasing, and, forgetful of all their debts and difficulties, they felt perfectly happy.

The races commenced, and the stand was crowded with spectators. Very large odds were loudly offered on a favourite steed, and without looking at the animals, Freeport cried out "done;" and Harroway, trusting to Sam's luck, followed his example. In less than a quarter of an hour they were each sixteen hundred rupees richer. Sam was satisfied, and, like a prudent man, declined to run any more risks. Harroway, on the contrary, feeling a glow of good luck, had another venture or two and lost back the sixteen hundred rupees, and several hundreds besides. Small as the sum actually was, it was to them a great consideration, and how to pay it, and be punctual with the instalment to the bank, caused Anne a good deal of anxiety, and made her very uncomfortable during the remainder of the meeting. All the while she was laughing, and amusing the many who flocked around to listen to her merry and witty tongue, she was calculating their means, and inwardly denouncing her husband's folly.

As they were returning to their home, and crossing the river, Anne said to her husband, "Since you have given an order on the paymaster for your losings, it behoves us to think how we are to provide for the monthly call."

"There's lots of time to think of that," was Harroway's remark.

"No; there is very little time," she replied. "The day is drawing near, and it would look bad to be behind hand."

"Well, I can't bother about it now. I am thinking of something else," he retorted.

"It strikes me, George," she rejoined, with a most winning and humorous smile, "that we cannot do better, under the present circumstances, than dispose of our plate and take to German silver."

Harroway was horrified at the proposition, but he could not help joining in her laugh.

"There is a great deal of fun," she observed, "in thinking of the poverty of the rich. Is there not, George?"

"I don't see any fun in it at all," he replied.

"Don't you, dear?" she rejoined. "Well, I declare it is very amusing. Do you know, I feel certain that before long we will be in very different circumstances, and the most pleasant reminiscences of our lives will be these days of pinching, screwing, and contriving. The sum you have lost is small, very small; and it might, you know, have been great, very great, for you had immense temptation and I wonder how you withstood it; but, at the same time, it behoves us to meet the affair, and so to arrange that it may not give us any temporary or subsequent annoyance."

"You are a good old creature, Anne," said Harroway, conscious of his own inferiority of mind. "You may do just as you like."

They landed and walked to their home, but not a servant was to be seen. They entered the bungalow, and Harroway called loudly for candles, but no answer. He proceeded to the out buildings, and found them deserted also. A lucifer match gave them a light, and with the aid of a small wax taper they discovered that the abode had been stripped of all that was of any value. In the bed-room, the ayah was found, stretched upon the floor in a state of unconsciousness. The poor woman (the only faithful servant they had) was under the influence of some very powerful narcotic, evidently administered some twenty-four hours previous to the arrival of her master and mistress.

Anne rushed to her dressing-table to get some *sal-volatile* from the medicine chest, but the medicine chest also had been carried away. Her work-box even was gone. Nothing remained but the bare table, a few chairs, and an old mattress to lie down upon. The servants had conspired, robbed the house, and made a safe retreat into some other part of the country.

CHAPTER XLI

"It is pretty certain that the bank will get no instalment this month, although we shall be obliged to take to German silver," observed Harroway. "What are we to do?"

"I confess I am unable to devise any scheme, George. Unless you can ask those whom you assisted in former days to assist you, now that you are in a difficulty," replied Anne.

"There is only one man who is in a position to lend me money," said Harroway, "and I used to accommodate him so often before he came in for what he has, that really I feel justified in asking him; albeit, the prospect of repayment is certainly very remote. It is a disagreeable thing to remind a man of an obligation; but there is no help for it in my case." With these words, Harroway walked quickly to the house of a young lieutenant, not very far distant from his own abode. He found his friend in an unsettled state of mind, and a groan frequently escaped him.

"You don't seem very comfortable this morning, Beavy," said Harroway. "What is the matter?"

"Did you ever feel conscious of having been cheated?" asked Beavy.

"Often," replied Harroway.

"Then you know how vexatious it is?"

"Yes; it is most annoying to feel that you have been cheated."

"And by a scoundrel whose very physiognomy, independent of his manners, ought to have induced you to shun him as a low, disreputable villain, who ought to be scouted. But there is some excuse for me. I had taken too much wine."

"I hope you have not been stuck?" said Harroway.

"Stuck?" echoed Beavy. "Stuck? I have been cheated out of six thousand rupees by that Captain Rooke, at écarté. Here is a copy of the scoundrel's ill-spelt note, reminding me that he is 'off to-morrow, and if it would be convenient,' &c."

"I am very sorry to hear it," returned Harroway. "But it serves you right; for you heard his character discussed the other night at the mess table; and you must have heard it said that he 'rooked' Rosbourne out of nearly a thousand pounds, by taking points from Rosbourne, and flattering his skill, when it was well known he could have given Rosbourne eighteen out of twenty-four."

"All very true," quoth Beavy. "All very true; only the misfortune is, George, we always find out our folly when it is too late to repair it."

It was not the time to ask for a loan from his friend; and Harroway paid a visit to Freeport, who was just as badly off as himself.

"Why don't you ask Beavy to pay the instalment for you?" said Sam. "He would do it in a minute."

"I doubt not he would," said Harroway; "but then he has just suffered an awkward loss, and I don't like to ask him."

"What loss?" inquired Sam; and Harroway related the particulars.

Freeport was very angry, and sent to Beavy to appear before him immediately.

"So you have been a regular fool, to play with a noted leg—have you?" commenced Freeport, when Beavy entered the room. "Have you paid him?"

"No, not yet," was the reply.

"Then do so at once. Send him a cheque instanter. I have not the most remote doubt on my mind you were cheated; for I am quite satisfied no man with such a villanous countenance as that fellow has could play fair if he tried. If his luck were ever so good, he would assist it with his art. But never mind, *I'll* have a hand with him, and we'll see if he rooks me. He drops his cards, does he? A card-dropper, eh? Pay him the money, Beavy, and if I don't get every penny of it back again, never trust to me again."

Freeport sat down, and wrote the following note:—

"MY DEAR ROOKE,—Give me the pleasure of your company to tiffin, after which we will have a little mild play. Yours,

"S. FREEPORT."

Rooke took the bait, and at about half-past one he was at Freeport's bungalow. Sam greeted him very graciously, and after a hasty, but hearty meal, they were both engaged. Sam played away in his usual careless manner—looking about the room, occasionally patting his dog on the back, and discoursing with Rooke on indifferent subjects, unconnected with the game, while his adversary was intent on the points and counters. Freeport won several games, and as many gold mohurs; and Rooke proposed to increase the stakes to *five* gold mohurs.

Sam assented, and they fired away again. Rooke was dealing, and while Sam was drinking a glass of beer out of a large pewter tankard, gave himself eight cards, instead of five; four of these cards he contrived to drop "by accident," and, by the same "accident," only picked up one of them. The remainder were left till the hand was played out, when Rooke afforded himself an opportunity of putting them into the pack. The score was getting heavy against Freeport, and Rooke was becoming remarkably *facete* and loquacious.

"By the powers, look at that!" he would ejaculate, whenever Sam turned up a king. "Blood an' ouns! what a narrow escape I had." (This phrase always followed his marking a point.) "Marry, come up, my jewel!" (This was whenever he looked out for a king himself, and got one.)

"What are you about?" cried Sam, as Rooke fished up *one* of his dropped cards.

"I've dropped a card. Who's play is it?" said Rooke.

"You dropped a whole handful," replied Sam. "Just look under the table."

"Impossible!" cried Rooke, somewhat disconcerted, and looking under the table. "Faith, there are cards down, but *I* couldn't have dropped them."

"Do you take me for a fool?" asked Sam. "Do you suppose I have



SAM DETECTS HIS ADVERSARY IN THE VERY ACT.

not observed you do the same sort of thing at least a dozen times—and always at this particular point of the game?”

Rooke became very pale. With a tremendous effort he recovered himself, and asked Sam what he meant. The reply was, “I believed you to be a cheat and a scoundrel before, and now I am certain of it.”

Rooke got up, with the intention of leaving the room; but Sam cut off his escape by standing in the doorway. “You are not going to get off so easily as you expect, my good fellow. I find you guilty of disgraceful malpractices, and I’ll punish you,” said he.

“What nonsense it is, kicking up a row,” said Rooke, feeling alarm at the fixed and firm look of the good-natured Freeport. “If you dispute the thing, why the account does not stand, and there’s an end of it.”

“No, there’s not,” quoth Freeport. “I believe you victimized a young officer of my regiment last night, and you were paid this morning. He declared you had cheated him, and my object in asking you to come and play here, was to find out how you did it. I am happy to think I have been successful. Are you prepared to disgorge your last night’s winnings?”

“Yes; but say nothing about it,” said Rooke, handing over Beavy’s cheque, with a sigh. “There now, it is all right. I hate disputes.”

“What an atrocious villain you are,” replied Sam. “And I fear there are more of your kidney in this country; fellows who sit down, without the slightest remorse, and rob a young man of his means, and plunge him into debt for the remainder of his life. If I should ever rise to be the commander-in-chief, I’ll take a line of my own, and hang such scoundrels as you are.”

“What’s the use?”—(Rooke was about to speak.)

“Hold your tongue, sir,” roared Sam, “or I will send for my servant to horsewhip you. The number of fathers, brothers, and sisters that are caused anxiety and annoyance by such harpies as you, is beyond calculation.”

“Come, come, now—” (Again Rooke tried to speak.)

“By the Lord Harry,” exclaimed Freeport, “if you interrupt me any more, I’ll have your hands tied behind your back, and I’ll send for the band, and have you dragged through the cantonments to the tune of the Rogue’s March. I am a quiet fellow, generally; but when I am roused, I am a British lion. Is there any chance of a notorious swindler like you commanding a regiment? What are you? How do you stand in your corps?”

(Rooke was a senior captain at this time. He hid his face in his hands, and writhed under the address from Freeport.)

Freeport resumed—“I have been informed, on the most undoubted authority, that you are now receiving a monthly payment of fifty rupees from a mere boy—out of his pay—for money won from him at cards. Is that true, or not?”

“Oh, quite false!” said Rooke.

“You lie, sir,” returned Freeport; “and unless you confess it—nay more, unless you give me the boy’s name, and write to absolve him from further payments—leaving me to forward your letter—I will bring the whole matter to the notice of the authorities.”

“For God’s sake!” cried Rooke.

"You wicked monster," ejaculated Sam, "to say such a thing. My terms are these; and I call on you to conform to them. There's the pen and ink and paper."

Rooke attempted to write, but his hand shook so fearfully he could scarcely pen a word sufficiently plain to be read.

"What have you written?" said Sam, snatching the paper from him. "You begin with 'My dear Charley.' Are you not ashamed of yourself? You will be hung yet; and if I should happen to be within a reasonable distance of the place of execution, I'll go and see you swing. I feel that I could smoke a cheroot, and have pleasure in observing your agonies. Now I come to look at you, I remember having seen you some few years ago at a billiard room in Dublin."

"Never was in Dublin in my life," said Rooke.

"What!" cried Sam; "I would swear to you! You were constantly playing with that famous marker. I know you by your eye: and now I come to think of it, they told me that you had won 10,000*l.* of an Indian prince? How did you do it? By billiards, cards, or *dice*, or by what, *eh*? Did you ever win ten thousand of such a person, or not?"

"Yes; but——"

"And you were in Dublin?"

"Now you mention it——"

"Mention it, you villain! Yes, I *will* mention it."

By this time Sam was pretty well exhausted, and he abruptly showed Captain Rooke the door. As that gentleman was walking out, Freeport raised his foot.

CHAPTER XLII.

FREEPORT never mentioned to any of his brother officers the particulars of what passed between himself and Captain Rooke. He returned to Lieutenant Beavy his cheque, and suggested that George Harroway was in sad want of money, and he (Beavy) ought to offer him assistance. The suggestion was acted upon, and the Harroways were temporarily relieved from their distress of mind.

The climate of India began to make a fearful inroad on the constitution of Anne, and the continued dread in which she lived of some calamity overwhelming them completely altered her appearance.

Harroway saw this, and it made him more miserable than could be well described. Anne's clear intelligent eye lost its brightness; her laugh was as frequent, but nothing like so hearty; and those indomitable spirits, which, hitherto, were rarely known to flag, were now kept up only by a violent effort of nature. She aged suddenly, as it were, in appearance; and the mind seemed to follow her looks. The regiment was ordered to proceed upwards, to another station, and it was necessary to prepare for the march. They had very little to "pack up," but Anne had scarcely strength to perform that duty. As for Harroway, he was, in all such matters, perfectly useless.

It gave Freeport great pain to observe the marked difference in Anne, and he felt as much for her as did her husband. It pained him to see her smile at his pleasantries, for her smiles were full of hollowness and despair; and what was more painful still, she seemed to cultivate her

own original wit for the purpose of leading others to suppose she was not unhappy; and many a time and oft, when her quaint sayings elicited peals of laughter, she could not disguise that she shared not in the enjoyment she occasioned.

"I hate, detest, abominate, and abhor this country," said Harroway, shutting up the regimental order book, which gave the detail of the march. I have a great mind to sell out and go home."

"Don't think of such a thing," said Anne. "You would be very foolish to give up your profession now; and after all, dear George, this is a better poor man's country than England. There is no want here; and by living prudently we can always live happily."

These words had scarcely passed Anne's lips, when the major was announced. He did not even speak to Anne, but walking up to Harroway, he shook him by the hand, and said, "What a lucky fellow you are, George. I am very glad of it."

"Oh, very lucky," replied Harroway; "very lucky. Sit down, major. What is the news?"

"Nothing particular; but I think you need not have been so reserved."

"About what?" inquired Anne.

"Now, none of your mystery," said the major. "And George, too, pretending to keep the thing quiet, is uncommonly good."

"You are the mysterious person, major," said Anne. "I have not an idea of what you are alluding to, and I am sure George has not."

"Charlotte was acquainted with the old lady," said the major, "and we never knew, strange to say, that you, George, had any expectations in that quarter."

"Upon my life, you are talking parables, major," remarked Harroway, "and neither of us can fathom them!"

"Have you not had any letters by this mail?" asked the major.

"Not one!" replied both Harroway and his wife.

"Did you know an old lady named Blaney?" said the major, looking at Harroway.

"Of course I did," he answered. "She was a first cousin of my father's. Old Blaney was a West India merchant."

"Well, she is dead," quoth the major.

"I hope she is happy, and has left us something," said Anne, who had never heard her name before.

"Left you something!" quoth the major. "But you are trifling with me. You must have heard of it."

"I assure you, we have heard of nothing," Harroway asserted.

"Then I am delighted to be the first to tell you that you have come in for a large fortune," said the major; "at least a hundred thousand pounds! Mrs. Blaney has left you all she possessed."

"It cannot be true," said Harroway. "And, if she did, depend upon it there would be some flaw or other, which would deprive me thereof. Besides, had it been the case, major, some one of my friends or relatives would surely have written to me."

Anne believed that her husband had come in for Mrs. Blaney's fortune; but George only smiled at her hopes. But he listened attentively to her *pros* and *cons*, and never slept a wink the whole night.

The next morning brought the Harroways not less than twenty-three

overland letters. The very postage on them drained Anne's purse of the last piece of silver. The budget portended a change of circumstances, and they knew not which envelope to break open first. Old Newsham's well-known hand invited the earliest notice—the more especially as his letter was addressed to Harroway, and not to his daughter, as usual.

"What is the matter, George?" said Anne, when she saw her husband's hand tremble, and the colour recede from his cheek, while he was reading.

"He says," replied Harroway, "that he is a millionaire—that we are to return to England immediately, and that he will restore to me the whole of the fortune he was the cause of my losing. He adds, that his wildest visions are all realized; and begs to be kindly remembered to Sam Freeport. I can read no more," replied Harroway. "I feel quite as faint as I did in that dreadful moment when I was made sensible of having lost it all. Indeed, dear, I am not equal to this."

Anne shuddered, and grew chill, on the momentary reflection that her thoughts for the future had ceased—that come what would, or could, George would no longer have to struggle for the means of livelihood. They sat looking at each other for at least ten minutes without speaking. At length Harroway laughed idiotically, and opened another letter.

"Can this possibly be real?" exclaimed Harroway.

"What, George?" said Anne, fancying that he alluded to what her father had written.

"Why, Anne, that Mrs. Blaney has left me the whole of her property, which is stated to be worth 76,000*l*. The major was right, it seems. This letter is from a disappointed young gentleman, who throws himself on my bounty—so he writes."

Anne could not trust her husband's eyes, and attempted to read the letter herself; but her tears prevented her.

Harroway opened a third letter, which came from a man named Bates. It ran thus:—

"MY DEAR HARROWAY—You broke off our correspondence, some years ago, by expressing an opinion that you neither credited my word, nor trusted my honour. I was your debtor, without the means of paying you; and my circumstances, bad as they were, were embittered by so severe a remark. I have just come in for moneys which ought to have fallen to me long before you ever had an opportunity of wounding my feelings; and I lose not a moment to remit you the sum of seven hundred and twenty-five pounds, and trust, that in acknowledging the receipt, you will do me the justice to admit that, numerous as the blackguards of this world may be, I am not worthy of being included in the category."

"Seven hundred and twenty-five pounds!" cried Harroway. "Bah!"

"Don't look at it in that way, George," said Anne. "Think of yesterday, and of our conversation last night, and you will not feel half so proud, George. We have committed several lies to paper, since we have been in difficulties, and it is hard to judge our neighbours uncharitably."

"What a teetotum world it is, to be sure!" said Harroway, after reading the fourth letter, and without reference to his wife's admonition. "Look at that. I have got my promotion, for only 300*l*. above the

regulation. Send the bearer out for wax lights, my love; it is impossible to read by these mutton fats; and only look at the mass of correspondence I have got to wade through. Hulloo! here is a curious affair, sealed with a thimble, and directed to Mr. Captain George Arroway, 'Squire, Leftinment of the — Regt. of Foot in the Fort of William in the East Indies of Bengal."

Anne was too happy to laugh at the odd address of this letter; but when George put it on one side, and laughed, and muttered to himself, "we can look at you by-and-bye," her curiosity was excited, and she begged him to give it to her. He complied with her request, and looked her in the face, prepared to hear that it disclosed some unimportant act of boyish folly, which in poverty would have jagged his very soul, but which in affluence he could turn into jest.

Anne opened the epistle, and read as follows—

"HONERED SIR—If you please Sir my husbind ringed the bells, Sir, for you weddin, and thou you gave the Clergeemen his fea, and pade evry body still my husbin was never recompensed, poor man, who dide in aperplexy, and was sorely distressed for bred at the time. I ear you are coinin gold in indee, and if this be true I only ope you will be so good as to remember the day as when you karried offe the most amiablest of girls that ever warked on God a mighty's hearth.

"I in great respect remain your obedient

"SARAH WADHAM."

George Harroway laughed heartily, when he heard this appeal; but his wife shed tears, from the sheer reflection that, had that letter reached them only a few days before, it would have given her more pain than all the debts that ever were hanging over them. Through the vista of wealth, she could see, in her imagination, old Sally Wadham's face, and while she read to her husband the remaining letters, which were of no import, the days of childhood became so vivid, she could not believe that there was a roaring sea between herself and the walls of dear old York.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE Harroways were vastly amused at the change which came over a few of their limited acquaintance. Persons who had been barely civil, became oppressively polite. Not that they expected any favours from these rich folks. The devotion appeared to be paid to their wealth, for the sake of its power. The poor subaltern might have called all round, anxiously wishing for an invite; but in vain. The same man, with so many thousands a year, was teased for his conversation.

Freeport borrowed sufficient to pay off all his debts; and Anne in her secret heart would have been delighted had they amounted to double the amount, that George might show him how welcome he was to their help. Sam, with all his coolness and quaintness, was a man of good principle, and fearing lest he should die, and George Harroway never be paid, he insisted on Anne taking care of his tiara of diamonds and emeralds, on the plea that he was afraid it might be lost on the march, as Blew had taken to drinking. He felt that his luck would be in danger,

but he preferred running the risk to leaving Harroway without security. He "made a fool of himself" when he parted with his "best of friends," and covering Anne's hands with kisses, he shed tears which would have made George jealous had they escaped any other man.

"I know not what there can be in this country to make me like it," said Anne, as they embarked on the steamer, "but I leave it, George, with a thousand regrets.

"Mention it not," replied her husband. "When I once put foot on British soil, I shall shudder at the very name of India."

"That is very ungrateful of you," she rejoined. "Even this dull place, wherein I have spent many an anxious and wretched hour, seems to say '*good bye*' to me in so kind a way that I am sorry to part with it."

CHAPTER XLIV.

WHEN they arrived at Calcutta, Rosny got hold of Harroway and wanted him to embark a sum of money in an "opium spec," which was to yield a profit in five months, of quadruple the outlay, but George smiled, and said—

"No, Rosny. I have been stung once, and now I am all for *safety*."

"Come and dine with us to-morrow evening," said Rosny. Harroway, without thinking, mechanically answered, "We shall be very happy." He was sorry that he accepted the invitation, a moment afterwards, for he feared Anne would be displeased; but it could not be avoided, and he didn't like to retract, lest Rosny should take it ill.

Anne was indignant and irate, when informed of the engagement, and she threw so much of her own spirit into her remarks, she reminded Harroway that although she had been a forbearing and a passive woman, as a poor man's wife, she was no longer to be trifled with; she reminded him warmly of his neglect of her, and notwithstanding he tried to laugh it off, he felt humbled in her presence. His manners, however, were so kind, and he so readily offered to write an excuse, that Anne's alarms were soon dispelled, and she experienced a strong curiosity to witness the meeting, and some sorrow that she had so severely reproached him.

The Rosnys were living in the same extravagant style, and in the same house. They had a large party, and by the time the Harroways were announced the greater portion of the company had assembled.

Mrs. Rosny wore her most becoming dress, and her prettiest smiles. She shook Anne warmly by the hand, and greeted her, and said how happy she was they had met again; but when she pressed George's hand, gently, she became pale, agitated, awkward, and silly. She endeavoured to disguise her confusion by talking rapidly and in a lively strain, but she gave utterance to the most exquisite nonsense. Rosny was a remarkably shrewd and sharp man, and he could see an immense deal; but then he was a man of peculiar temperament, and had a strong dislike to looking. He opened a conversation with Mrs. Harroway, all about the Upper Provinces, where he had never been; and he contrasted them with the lower, and dwelt with emphasis on the superiority of "tone" in the society of the latter. Anne yielded, for while she was assenting

to propositions, it was easy enough to use her quick grey eyes, and observe her spouse and Mrs. Rosny, who were chatting together very cozily at the other end of the room, Mrs. Rosny having led him there to show him a beautiful engraving, which, to her infinite disgust, the provoking man admired, and commented upon in the most matter-of-fact manner possible, without once looking tenderly into the large and lustrous blue eyes, which had in readiness for him a most imploring expression. She raised her marble arm, and pointed her pretty little finger to a figure in the picture which she most admired, or pretended to admire, and while she did this, she showed the dimple in her elbow; but the heart of Harroway had grown as cold as the stone to which I owe my metaphor. She sighed audibly; and Harroway was cruel enough to ask her if she had ever travelled in one of the company's accommodation boats; and when those delicate coral lips sorrowfully said "No," he was unfeeling enough to say, "Then you have no idea of the comfort of them. The Government deserves the greatest credit, really; for I question whether they pay or not. They carry, comparatively speaking, very little cargo, and the number of passengers cannot be very great." All this, too, was uttered in a rather loud and demi-pompous demi-affected tone, so different from the gurgling whisper adopted by Mrs. Rosny when she dilated on the merits of the engraving—"the young Jewess appealing to the inquisition in Spain."

Mrs. Rosny was determined that Harroway should flirt with her. She had shown him extreme kindness when most people were indifferent to him, when he was a "mere nobody," as it were; and now that Rosny described him as a man of "enviable capital," she considered that her honour, or rather her reputation, was at stake if she did not gain an ascendancy and enlist his affections afresh; but the winningness of even a very handsome and very lively woman was of little avail with a man of whom misfortune had made a perfect fool, and whose reason had returned with the tide of prosperity. The cold "good night" which Captain Harroway bade Mrs. Rosny cut her to the soul; but it made her a more exemplary woman than ever she had been before, although old Rosny thought her a much more tiresome creature.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE regiment reached its destination, and Sam Freeport made the acquaintance of all the leading people at the time referred to. The never-ending topic of conversation was banks and investment of capital. Freeport listened very attentively to several of the chief orators on these subjects, and picked up all the conventional jargon applicable thereto. He then set himself up as a first-rate financier, and discoursed on all sorts of monetary transactions, in such wise as to induce all who listened to him to believe that he knew more about such matters than most men in the country. The result was that Sam Freeport was invited, in a most complimentary letter, to become a bank director.

Sam said that his money was all locked up in England, and he could not, therefore, command the required qualification. That difficulty, however, was very soon got over. A single share was transferred to

him, and registered in his name, and sure enough there was Samuel Freeport, Esq., published to the world as a bank director.

The officers of his corps were convulsed with laughter when they came to hear of it; and Sam's open and avowed declaration that he would never refuse any poor devil a loan, no matter who he might be, tended to increase the merriment. His remarks in "the minute-book" were extremely clever, if they were only looked at as "wordy nothings," bearing the appearance of deep thought and considerable experience. For some time Sam neither did any harm nor good. He attended regularly, for the sake of the chat over his cup of coffee, and voted with the majority whenever there was a difference of opinion. But at length there became a balance of power, and a show of party, when Sam Freeport (a man who never could keep an account in his life, or look after his own little means), virtually regulated the disposal of operations, which, with justice, might be deemed "stupendous." Sam saw pretty well which way the wind was blowing, and determined to be fair to both parties. He therefore, before going to a meeting, would spin a rupee in the air, and call out, "if it is Billy, the king, I vote for Boshier, if it is a woman, I vote for Slew;" and acting honestly up to his resolution, he frequently got the credit of being a variable and inconsistent director, who did not know his own mind for two meetings together. But Sam also got the credit of being a very straight-forward, upright, and conscientious man, and no parsnips in this world were ever more plentifully buttered with the real lacteal produce, than was Sam Freeport with sweet words from both parties. Frequently would he laugh to himself, while in the act of shaving, and exclaim—"Upon my soul, it is quite refreshing to hear such universal testimony to one's perfect knowledge of all business transactions," and then, spinning the rupee, he would add, "well, what's the odds, so long as we're happy? Here goes!"

One Wednesday morning Sam Freeport, as usual, attended in his directoral capacity. A very important question was discussed. It involved a verystrong measure, which might be viewed in fifty different lights by the proprietary and the public at large. His co-directors, as usual, were divided, and it came to Sam's turn to give his opinion. He forgot, at the moment, whether Boshier or Slew had won the toss, and the very fact of his forgetfulness made Sam go off into a violent fit of laughter, whereupon he was reminded by every one that the question was one of great weight.

"I have a deuced good mind to vote with *you*," said Sam, to a gentleman (Slew) who could not help laughing at Freeport's expression of face. "We are evidently the only people who agree."

"How do you mean?" said Boshier, a little frightened, for he was deeply interested in the issue.

"Why, that the whole thing is a regular farce," replied Sam.

"I don't see that," said Slew.

"Don't you?" said Sam. "Then I'll vote with Boshier, and prove it."

There was an immense sensation, during which Boshier cried out—"Vote, Freeport, vote away—vote, my good fellow—Slew is badgering you—vote away, Freeport."

"No, I'm blow'd if I will!" cried Sam. "Look here! While our deliberation was confined to a sort of pawn-broking business, I contented myself with voting by *head* or *tail*."

"Explain," cried Slew, indignantly.

"I understand you, Freeport," cried Boshier, in a conciliatory tone. "But vote away, Freeport, and discuss it afterwards."

"No! no!" quoth Sam. "I am not so easily to be caught, old boy. What I mean is this: I have thought it more impartial to spin a rupee in the air, and thus leave to Providence and chance an honest correction of human passions and prejudices, self-interest, and so forth; but since I find a really weighty and important question, I am awakened to a sense of my own impropriety in pretending to control what I don't comprehend; and if two-thirds of us did the same, it would be an act in accordance with our consciences, however displeasing it might be to our vanity. The idea of this farce being enacted twice a week, eh!"

Sam threw himself back in his chair, and roared with laughter; then, suddenly assuming a grave face, and bending forward, he remarked:

"I only hope it may never be turned into a tragedy. From this hour I have done with it. But, before I go, I will record the only sensible minute perhaps I have made in the books—namely, that it would be much better to give a man fifty thousand rupees a year for the entire management of the concern, and place him above temptation, and make him more responsible, than pay as we do now, and be subject to this absolute mockery."

"You are quite wrong," cried Boshier.

"I can't see that," said Slew. "But vote away, Freeport. It is getting late, and I want to smoke a cheroot. Vote, my dear fellow. Boshier is cantankerous—vote away!"

"Not a bit of it," retorted Sam. "It would be rascally, I think, in me, with nothing at stake here, to trifle with the interests of men who have thousands of pounds embarked in the Institution. I reproach myself for doing what I have done already. I retire. Good bye to you. I wish you all success."

CHAPTER XLVI.

IN order to prove, beyond all question, that he had become a steady character, and was a completely altered man, Sam Freeport transmitted to his relatives in England, copies of the newspapers wherein he flourished as a bank director. He moreover interlarded his letters so thickly with "per cent.," "premium," "dividends," "stock," "reserve," &c., &c., that they believed his heart and soul were devoted to money making. His rich brother, who was a man of liberal spirit, was delighted at the change that he fancied had come over Sam; and feeling conscious that Sam's extravagant and careless turn of mind had alone prevented the old man from sharing his property more favourably to the youngest son, he determined on doing the proper thing, and increase Samuel's store. Four thousand pounds were accordingly remitted to Sam, as a gift, and a hope was expressed that it would soon be doubled by prudent management.

When Freeport received the letter, he chuckled, rubbed his hands, and resolved on going home on medical certificate. Another fortnight found him packing up his traps, and very shortly after he was in Calcutta, where he threw away a goodly sum of money on frivolities, and renewed

his acquaintance with Mrs. Rosny, who was more civil and kind to him than when he was quartered in the Fort.

No man ever left the shores of India, perhaps, with so extensive a circle of acquaintance as Sam Freeport. He appeared to know *everybody*, and everybody knew him. His visit to England was without any object beyond that of seeing the Harroways, and talking over troubles which were past and gone.

CHAPTER XLVII.

AFTER a few days' stay in Bath, the Harroways set off for York. It was a dark and foggy night when they entered the city; but Anne fancied she could see the inmates of every house they passed. How sweet to the ear was the dialect of her town's-people, and how impatient did she become to arrive at her father's door. A wagon in one of the narrow streets impeded their progress, and the post boy was obliged to rein in and walk the horses. Anne hurriedly put down the glass window, and called out to him to go on faster, faster! It was not possible; and presently they had to stop; for the post-boy having bullied the wagoner, he gave his horses a rest. The chances were they would be half an hour detained in that narrow street, and Anne suggested to her husband that they should walk, and leave the carriage to follow them. It was cold, and Harroway had just awoke from a sound sleep. He therefore recommended patience. But Anne opened the door and sprung out, and he was compelled to follow.

"Is this what you call walking, Anne?" laughed Harroway, as he ran after his wife.

"The more haste the less speed," I declare," cried Anne. "I am weary, George—support me!"

She leant upon his arm, and walked quietly, till they reached the well-known door.

Old Newsham was all alone. Since he had taken to dabbling in stocks so extensively as he then was doing, he suffered none of his family to be in the house with him. His mind was bent on figures, and the slightest interruption almost drove him mad. He expected his favourite child every moment; yet he was intent on a very intricate calculation, and debating with himself the best way of making a good "hedge" in a grand project he had just engaged in. A long and loud rap at the door assured him Anne had arrived, albeit he heard not the sound of carriage wheels. Still, old Newsham stayed to multiply 93 by 66 before he seized the candle and rushed from his office to the hall. He could not have recognised Anne, but for her voice and her eyes. They, alone, were unchanged. He used to be very proud of Anne's girlish looks, and he felt sorry to find they had departed. She did not look old, but *passé*; and this, Newsham did not expect to find in Anne, at twenty-three years of age.

But time had altered Newsham, even more than it had altered his daughter. His hair was as white as snow; his forehead, from continual thought and anxiety, was a mass of small wrinkles or furrows; his eyes were restless, and always wide open; he had a way, too, of pinching his fingers, and biting his under lip, which Anne had never observed in him.

before. Formerly, Newsham was a very talkative man, and his manners were blandness and suavity personified; but he had become so reserved and silent, that his demeanour almost amounted to rudeness. He had not exchanged more than a dozen sentences with Harroway and Anne, when he touched upon business.

"I will restore to you," said Newsham, seizing his pen, and making figures on the blotting-paper, "I will restore to you the amount of property you lost through my advice, and an awful sum it is to give up, certainly (he sighed). But, recollect, Captain Harroway, that the money you embarked as an investment ought to be deducted; for, if a man speculates on another's advice, and loses, he ought to pay for it himself."

"Oh! certainly," said Harroway—"certainly."

"And then, there is another thing," said Newsham. "That money which I *first* deposited for the purchase of your company, that ought to be deducted. It was on your account, you know."

"By all means," conceded Harroway.

"With interest," observed Newsham.

"Yes, with interest."

"Of course, the money that I deposited a second time you will repay to me, because you have the value of it in your promotion?"

"That, of course!"

"That, also, with interest?"

"Yes."

"And there are several other matters of smaller importance, but which I must have deducted. Now, to-morrow, I shall not have one moment to spare; I have a meeting here, to transact some very important business. Here are bills on my bankers, in London, which will be accepted on presentation. The amount is one hundred thousand pounds; for the rest, you must give me a little time."

"This is much more than ever I expected," replied Harroway. "But, tell me, will the payment distress you?"

"Distress me!" sneered the old man, with a toss of his head. "The world is too full of fools for all that!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ANNE did not feel so happy in the home of her childhood as she had anticipated. She had pictured to herself that it would remind her of days and scenes when she had never tasted of sorrow, and when the heart seemed bursting with its excessive joy. But all was changed. The walls were bare, and there was a cold, poverty-stricken appearance about the whole place, which made her miserable. They could hear Newsham pacing the room, and talking to himself. Anne got up, crept down stairs, and looked through the half-opened door. There stood her father, gesticulating, as though he were making a speech in a confidential manner, and explaining to a number of persons something which they did not comprehend. Then, he sat down, and grinned placidly; then, he seized his pen, and wrote with wonderful rapidity. She thought the old man must be mad, or that he had some project in his head which

had for its end, delusion, deceit, and illicit gain. The thought that either the one or the other suspicion was well-founded wounded her to the soul. She returned to her room, and imparted her suspicions to her husband; and she further suggested the prudence of George's realizing his money and securing it. Harroway laughed at her ideas of danger; but that wonderful foresight, which some women are possessed of, caused her to press the matter; and at length she brought him over to be guided by her advice, and insisted on his going to London, without delay, and losing not a moment in drawing his money from her father's bankers. Anne began to doubt, indeed, whether so large a sum was forthcoming, and thought that, perhaps, the old man only fancied he was possessed of so much wealth as he talked about. This created in Harroway a kindred doubt; and the next morning, at daylight, he took a place in the mail coach for London, leaving Anne alone with her father.

When Anne came down to breakfast, the change in her father's habits was even more visible than ever. Instead of everything around him being clean and comfortable, if not costly, there was a filthy tablecloth, spread upon the commonest deal wood table, two or three cups and saucers, of various patterns, bone-handled knives, and steel forks, pewter spoons—and all the other table appointments to match. He asked a few questions about India; but evidently they were not asked out of mere curiosity, but with a view to some speculation. He was about to order a carriage and horses to convey Anne to Thorp Arch, where her sisters and her mother were residing; but suddenly he checked his hand, and told Anne she had better write in her husband's name. The meanness which characterised this act of her father's was very palpable, and it shocked, while it amused her. A half-starved cat, which belonged to the cook (the only servant he kept) came and mewed piteously beside Anne's chair, and she instantly cut a piece of the cold mutton and gave it to the poor creature.

"Good God, child!" cried Newsham, "where on earth did you learn such extravagance? Consider the starving creatures in the streets, who would be glad of that wholesome meat! Rats and mice, and such vermin, are the proper food for dogs and cats. When they cease to provide for themselves they become useless. Never bestow your bounty upon animals."

"You used to be very fond of dogs and cats, father," said Anne, smiling.

"I know, my dear, I used to be very fond, in former days. I hope you have not forgotten the meaning of *fond*. But I know better now. I made a calculation the other day, and I proved that, if I had saved all the money which I threw away on dinners, parties, and follies, for a period of seventeen years, and had gone on compounding the interest every three or six months, the difference would have been to me no less than forty-three thousand pounds. Supposing I had saved 700*l.* the first year—the interest of that for three months at 4 per cent. would have been 7*l.* The interest of that 707*l.* for three months more, would have made it amount to 714*l.* 14*s.*, and so on. Then when the second year's savings came to be added, it would have gone on like a snow ball, till at last it would have been a mountain. Compound interest—Compound interest! Oh, it's a wonderful—a glorious—thing,

when you come to think of it. And so very simple, too. A child may see it. The money that is squandered in this world is beyond conception. Here is a pewter table spoon. If it were of silver, its value would be ten shillings—if I kept it for twenty years—it would cost me 30% or 40%, if not more. Think of that! Oh!”

“But then you give up comforts,” argued Anne.

“Indeed not,” responded the old man, “I am as comfortable now as ever I was in my life. I want nothing beyond what you see here.”

“Then your argument cuts both ways. What is the use of great wealth, if you do not want it?” urged Anne.

“You speak foolishly,” said Newsham. “But it is my fault. I brought you up in absurd notions of show—instead of teaching you the benefits of substantiality. It cannot be helped now. Here is the carriage. I will see you all on Sunday.”

CHAPTER XLIX.

HARROWAY, in person, presented his bills on Newsham’s London banker. It was an anxious five minutes that he passed while the old, bald headed man who was at the head of the firm inspected them—pressed his forehead—muttered “three days’ sight,” and referred to a large ledger which was spread open before him.

The old man put on his spectacles—looked at Harroway—and said, in a slow and measured voice—“Mr. Newsham has advised me of these bills. He says they are drawn in favour of his son-in-law. Are you that party, or his agent?”

Harroway replied, “I am Captain Harroway—the party in whose favour they are drawn.”

“Who are your bankers, may I ask?”

“At present I have none.”

“Then, perhaps you would have no objection to open an account here?”

“Not the least. I formerly banked with a house in King William street; but they didn’t behave very well to me on one occasion.”

The old man, with a trembling hand, wrote “accepted” across the bills, and handed them to Harroway. “When they become due,” said he, “if you bring them here, we will carry the amount to your credit.”

Harroway bowed assent, and left the office. He felt somewhat nervous, without knowing why, and although his bankers in the city had not behaved well to him, still he knew them to be shrewd men of business, and it struck him he would consult them. On entering the little parlour, he was instantly recognised, shaken warmly by the hand, and congratulated on having come in for Mrs. Blaney’s property.

After a few minutes, Harroway produced Newsham’s “accepted” drafts, and explained all the circumstances relating to them. The partners looked at each other, and smiled—much to Harroway’s discomfort.

“I hope it is all right?” said Harroway.

There was no reply—and this circumstance, combined with the last words of his wife, (“George, now, whatever you do, get your money, and make it safe,”) put Harroway on tenter hooks. He inquired if they would negotiate the bills. They answered “No—not without a guarantee and security.” He then asked if they had reasons for doubting the solvency of the acceptors. One of the partners remarked that the acceptors were mixed up in a bubble for constructing a city on the banks of the Ohio, which was to become the emporium of the whole world; and that for weeks past, their credit was doubtful. Harroway then told them what the old man said about “opening an account,” and he asked the advice of his old bankers. They advised him to place the sum to floating account, and draw it out by degrees, and here they gave a decided opinion that, if he attempted to draw the whole sum out at once, the firm might suspend payment.

Harroway did not sleep for more than twenty minutes together until the bills became due. He called on the acceptors, and his fears were almost dispelled by the jaunty air the old man put on, and the encomiums he passed on Newsham’s gigantic powers of mind, and extraordinary good fortune. He was advised by the old man, not to allow the money to remain with the bank, but to invest in American bonds, or buy an estate. This inspired Harroway with confidence, and he said he “would rather let it remain.” Harroway was invited by the old man to give him the pleasure of his company to dinner that evening.

CHAPTER L.

ANNE’s mother and sisters were overjoyed to meet with her again. But Anne observed a great difference in them. Although their style of living was in striking contrast to the style she observed in her father’s domicile, still there was a discontented manner in her mother, which her sisters seemed to partake of. She delivered her father’s message—that he would see them on the following Sunday; but it grieved her to find that, instead of the announcement being hailed with joy, it was heard in silence, and with apparent regret. Anne began to think that George’s money was in jeopardy, and in that thought she was extremely anxious. She questioned her relations about her father’s affairs, but gleaned no information; for the best of reasons—they were unable to afford any. This redoubled her fears, and Anne longed for the hour when a letter from George would relieve her mind. The Sunday morning came, and Newsham arrived at Thorp Arch. All his children were present, and Mrs. Newsham reminded him of that circumstance; but he merely tapped his front tooth with his forefinger nail, and abstractedly remarked that it was “very gratifying indeed.”

In the evening the old man walked with his family in the garden; but in the midst of a conversation he would stop suddenly, and make calculations on the gravel walk, with his oak stick. He asked Anne what had become of Freeport, and before she could reply, he quite forgot having mentioned his name.

Newsham’s return to York was a relief to his family; and yet, when

he was gone, they appeared more unhappy than when he was amongst them. The old servants had heard of "Miss Anne's" return, and came from a distance to welcome her back, and give her a blessing. They, too, were changed, and spoke of "bygone days" with a sigh.

Anne received a letter from her husband; but it was so vague and indefinite she knew not what to make of it. He believed (he said) all would be right, and would inform her as soon as it was settled. She questioned her mother again and again, as to their means; but she could glean nothing further than that her father had amassed an immense sum, by speculations, and that he was endeavouring to double it.

It was the 1st of February—the anniversary of Anne's marriage; Newsham was reminded of it, and he came to spend the day at Thorp Arch. He was unusually cheerful and gay, and more like what he was in former days. Towards evening dark clouds gathered in the west, and several flashes of vivid lightning, unaccompanied with thunder, issued therefrom. Towards nine o'clock the wind whistled round the house, and old Newsham had an extra glass of toddy, and sat over the fire, chatting merrily. The wind lulled about half-past ten, and the family retired to bed. At midnight, the wind got up again, and increased till it blew a strong gale. By two o'clock it blew a hurricane, which roared so loudly that it was almost impossible for men to hear one another's voices. The houses shook, the chimneys of nearly all of them fell with a crash; and even on the dry land the stoutest hearts were struck with terror when they contemplated the fury of the elements. The Newsham family congregated in one small room, and endeavoured to pacify Anne, who, when she was awakened, was dreaming that she saw George on the deck of a Hull steam boat; and nothing would satisfy her that he had not taken his passage in one of those boats, and was then on his way to join her. The gale continued throughout the whole of the next day. The cattle, in the fields, instinctively threw themselves down at full length, to avoid being driven along and dashed against whatever might stand in their way—the birds were blown towards the southward, unable to stem the howling blast; the largest trees were torn up by the roots, and those which stood were stripped of their smaller branches; the world seemed coming to an end, and in the general alarm old Newsham forgot the magnitude of his transactions, and all that related to them.

CHAPTER LI.

NEWSHAM'S London banker, a Mr. Brade, was once a conspicuous member of society, but having narrowly escaped being convicted of murder for having shot an antagonist in a duel, he was not known, by the married and the moral, except as a man of business and a wealthy banker. Late in life he had married a young lady, who commenced her career as a singer upon the boards of the French Opera, in Paris, and who subsequently came to England as governess to a family connexion of Brade's. She was a very pretty little Parisian, and she had the most compact little figure imaginable. Her manners were extremely captivating, and sh

sang with great skill and taste. She called herself "Madame La Comtesse de Fleur" when she first came to England; but she was generally known, after marriage, as "Madame Brade." She was not "visited" (as the phrase goes), and she cared very little about that; for she had immense resources within herself, and she preferred being the queen of all her husband's bachelor acquaintance, to sharing with others the admiration that is bestowed upon her sex in large assemblies.

The evening on which Harroway dined with Mr. Brade, he met some ten or twelve persons who were utter strangers to him. There was a novel writer of some celebrity, who had made a "heroine" of Mrs. Brade; there was a magazine poet, who had written at least five and thirty sonnets to her, and had published them in his favourite periodical; there was a renowned wit, who invariably allowed Madame to have the advantage of him in repartee, and turn the laugh that he raised against himself; there was one Frank Derriden, famed for his funny songs and irresistible humour; there was a great antiquarian who had just returned from Egypt; there was a comedian, into whose face no man could look (until he got used to it) without laughing immoderately; and there were several partners of various banks. Harroway was struck with the extraordinary manner in which Madame Brade divided her attentions. Every one whom she spoke to fancied he was "the favoured guest," so varied and so winning was the expression of her face. Before he had been ten minutes in her company, he seemed to know her just as well as if he had been acquainted with her all his life. She had taken the trouble (as she did on all occasions) of previously inquiring from Brade what was Harroway's profession, what part of the country he came from, where he had travelled, &c. &c.; and she had an *impromptu* conversation already made for him—a conversation that fitted him exactly. There was a degree of levity in Madame Brade's manner; but then it was mingled with so much *empressement* and seeming candour, that it pleased rather than disgusted even the most scrupulous. During the evening she sang several pieces from the fashionable operas of the day, and, off the stage, Harroway had never heard the like before. His soul was entranced; and as he drove to his rooms in Suffolk-place, he said to himself, "Hang me if any banker with a wife like that can be an unsafe man. While I am in town I shall cultivate their acquaintance."

* * * * *

The following morning Harroway called on Madame, and had the satisfaction of hearing all the people he had met on the previous night pulled to little pieces, one by one. His vanity was flattered by certain praises Madame bestowed not *upon* him, but *at* him. The fact was, she saw what was his weak point—namely, a full appreciation of riches—and she directed her discourse straight for the heart. Harroway was captivated, and thought her the most delightful creature on the face of the earth.

On the night of the 2nd of February, Harroway went to a ball; but finding it rather stupid, he returned early. It occurred to him that, before retiring, he would write several letters, and he was in the act of sealing them, when he felt a hand upon his left shoulder. He was startled, for he had seen no one enter the room. He turned round sharply, and beheld the face and form of old Newsham, who appeared to be dripping wet. "Good heavens, sir!" exclaimed Harroway, "what has brought you to London?"

"Save your money! Trust not to Brade!" was all he heard (or seemed to hear—for he was all alone in the apartment).

Harroway was very much alarmed, but he had the presence of mind to look at his watch. It was ten minutes past one. He tried to persuade himself that his sight had deceived him; and yet the pressure on his shoulder was so heavy and palpable, he could not doubt his sense of feeling as well as of sight. He called the servants up and questioned them; but one and all protested that the door had not been opened since he came in. Remain alone he could not, and therefore he ordered a hackney-coach to be called, went again to the ball, and stayed till the last of the guests departed, which was not till nearly five o'clock.

Although he was wearied, Harroway could not close his eyes. The wrinkled brow and white hair, the bony cheek and compressed mouth of Newsham, were too indelibly stamped on his memory.

The hour of business came, and he went into the city. He drew on Brade for half of the amount in his hands. The cheque was honoured, and on the following day Harroway drew for the remainder. That also was paid. Then was the time for Harroway's old bankers to "*smash*" their great rival and foe. They caused a steady run for a few hours on Brade's bank, and they broke it!

Harroway was walking down Regent-street, about four o'clock one afternoon, ruminating on a thousand things, and wishing for the morrow, that he might be once more on the road towards his wife. Harroway was in one of those moods when the eye sees, but observes not; and although he looked in the face of nearly every man and woman he met, he could not have recollected their features a moment afterwards. Suddenly, he was seized round the waist, or rather the hips, and held aloft in the air, by some strong man, who held his head down, so as to render recognition impossible. After a few moments, however, he was placed on the ground, and to his wonder and amazement (for Sam had never told him of his movements) he beheld Freeport, whose first words were, "Lord, how light you've got, George! You're a mere feather! What have you been doing, to make away with yourself in this manner, eh?"

"Good gracious Sam, is that *you*?" cried Harroway. "What can have brought you home?"

"Cashiered, sir! cashiered, sir!" answered Sam, in his own off-handed way. "It can't be helped—walk along. You must have heard of it."

"Indeed not," exclaimed Harroway, with a dejected countenance.

"It could not be helped!" repeated Sam, sorrowfully.

"What was it for?" inquired George, anxiously; but conscious that it was for no disreputable offence that would affect Sam's honour.

"The fact is," said Sam, laughing loudly in George's face, "the fact is, George, they found me guilty of paying ready money for a variety of things I bought at an auction. What a spoon you are, George, to be taken in so easily!"

It was an immense relief to Harroway to hear that Freeport was not cashiered, and right glad was he to see Sam's face again. He forgot, for the time being, all about his affairs, and proceeded to ask a hundred questions, and give replies to an equal number.

"Now then, George, let us think of dining. Where do you hang out?" said Freeport.

"I am staying in lodgings here, in Suffolk Place."

"Lodgings! lodgings!" exclaimed Sam. "A man of your property in lodgings! Bless my heart, I'm living at the Burlington! And what's more, I've got a small party this evening. Men in our position in life, George, can't afford to live in lodgings. Military men of our rank in lodgings!"

As Sam uttered these words, he assumed a pompous air, buried his chin in his cravat, and swaggered haughtily along the pavement, until Harroway stood still, and begged and prayed of him to desist, and not make him laugh so loudly and indecently in the public streets.

"Breathes there a man so dead," asked Sam, looking searchingly into Harroway's face, with an expansive wave of the hand, "who never to himself hath said—this is my own my native land!"

"For Heaven's sake, Sam, desist!" cried Harroway. "Look, man, everybody is staring at us!"

"Well, let 'em stare, poor devils," responded Sam. "What did we come back from Bengal for, but to be stared at? Stare, sir! It is one of the few glorious privileges of a Briton! Let 'em stare. The first fellow that I catch staring, I'll shake hands with him."

An old gentleman, with long grey hair, and jet black moustachoes, caught Freeport's eye. Sam confronted him, and Harroway bit his lips to preserve gravity.

"How do you do? I'm glad to see your grace out again!" said Sam, bowing.

The old gentleman bowed, and, in a courteous voice, replied:

"I am General Wight."

"A thousand pardons, General," said Sam. "I thought I was addressing the Duke of Devonshire."

"Not the least offence," returned the General, with a smile, and passed on, as Sam raised his hat, gracefully.

"I cannot stand this," laughed Harroway.

"Then I don't know how you will stand the way I mean to gull my party this evening, about India," observed Freeport. "Really, George, the people of England will believe anything. Not only the people, sir, but the higher classes—men, who you would suppose ought to know something. But no, sir, you may cram them without limit or reserve. Hang me, if I have not a good mind to buy a lot of medals, and give myself out as the hero of Rangoon and Seringapatam—the saviour of our dominions in the east—stand for the city of London, sir—get returned—carried about on men's shoulders, sir—and dragged through the streets in a phaeton, decorated with flags!"

"You exaggerate their ignorance, Sam," said Harroway. "They are not so bad as all that."

"Very well, you shall see," said Freeport; "only don't laugh, and throw a doubt on my statements by doing so."

* * * * *

Freeport's party consisted of five gentlemen, whose acquaintance he had but recently made. There was a member of Parliament (a Welchman); a major, on the half-pay list; an unattached colonel, who had been in the West Indies (and who was in the habit of telling as many "stories" about them, seriously, as did Sam of the East Indies, in jest); a student of Lincoln's-Inn, who was then employed in writing an article on the Affghanistan campaign, for publication in one of the reviews.

This gentleman was naturally anxious to hear a man who had been in "the very thick of it," speak his mind openly, and without prejudice to any one. The fifth guest was a decrepit doctor, who never had had any practice, and who was never likely to have any, though he was the author of several very scientific medical books.

The half-pay major had been a very sporting character in his day, and the cloth was no sooner removed than he said to Sam :

"I say, Freeport, what sort of racing have you in India?"

"The best in the whole world!" said Sam. "I have seen a field of five-and-thirty Arabs start for a welter. Harroway, don't be a cork; tool that carriage round, please."

"What's a welter worth?" said the major.

"Oh, four or five hundred gold mohurs, or so," said Sam, with matter-of-fact coolness.

"And what's a gold mohur?"

A gold mohur?—Five pound ten."

"Is the pace good?"

"Wonderful!" cried Sam. "My best Arab once did his mile in 1-13, and was beaten hollow!"

"Were you fortunate on the turf?"

"Very! I won nine thousand pound at the last meeting, at Crammeramdabore!"

"I beg your pardon—where?"

"Crammerromdodombore," said Sam, emphatically, but boldly, having forgotten the word he had himself invented.

"How do you manage for jockeys?"

"Natives. People of the country."

"Do they ride well?"

"*Beau-eu-eu-tifully!*" cried Sam, as he lighted a cheroot. "Very superior to your Day, and your Robinson, and those fellows. A native, you know, never loses his self-possession. If an English jockey is colared by his adversary—if he finds a horse suddenly on his own beast's quarter—I don't know whether you have observed it, but *I* have frequently—he becomes anxious, and sometimes uses the spur and the whip when he might prudently reserve it; but a *native* jockey, sir—a native of *India*—he's as collected, and as cool as a cucumber; there's none of your top-sawyer movement of the elbows with him—none of your muscular movement of the legs." [Here, Sam Freeport threw himself into the attitude of a jockey hard-pressed, but gently feeling the animal's mouth, and slightly grinding him up to the pace required.] "Lord, sir, close as wax—the eye intent—it is beautiful to see them ride! They have such nerve—such judgment—such temper—such command. Harroway, do oblige me by passing the port and sherry coach, and making the claret and madeira follow. You remember that boy of mine, Harroway, called Corryborry? How beautifully he used to ride, eh?"

"Superb!" responded Harroway, perceiving that Sam had a *carte blanche*. "Superb!"

"I was once compelled to put that boy to a very severe trial," continued Sam, looking at the major. "I had a heavy sum on the event. In this country, it would be considered cruel, but in India it would not; for endurance and tortitude, without a murmur, is the characteristic of

the genuine Indian, such as he was. I had a match for 500 gold mohurs. One of my horses against another stable; Corryborry was to ride. Twice round the course, a distance of four miles. The boy, sir, said he was a stone too much for the horse, and that I must lose if I started for the race. These fellows are deuced knowing, and I listened to him eagerly. After a little, the faithful Ethiopian remarked: 'Puspration se hoga.' Puspration means sweating, as you may suppose," said Sam; "se hoga, signifies you may do it by those means."

"God bless me!" cried the doctor.

"Well, sir," resumed Sam, "it was the cold weather, and I wrapped the boy up in blankets, placed him before a roaring coal fire, and poured in hot grog to an incredible extent. Like all the Hindu race, he seemed to like it, and you never saw a fellow in such a state of intoxication in your life. Meanwhile, he was perspiring like fury, and fancying he was in a river, he began to strike out, as though he were swimming. This made him perspire more than ever, and at last he was regularly exhausted, and called for more grog, which I gave him. Well, Sir, as he had to ride the day after this, I thought it right to make him sober, and sent for a particular herb, which grows in all the gardens."

"What's the name of the herb?" asked the doctor.

"The native name is kabdub," replied Sam; "but I forget the botanical name. Do you remember it, George?"

"No—I do not," said Harroway.

"Well, the botanical name does not signify," said Sam. "But all I can say is, that it brought the boy to in no time; and when he got into the scales the next day—by Jove! sir, so far from being a stone over weight, I was forced to put a shot-belt round his waist, give him a heavy whip to carry, and put the heaviest stirrups I could find on the racing saddle, just to bring him up to the minimum weight agreed upon."

"How horribly cruel!" cried the member of parliament.

"Horribly cruel, I admit," said Sam. "But then, we get into the habit of cruelty in India. We have such examples set us by the government, one can't help being cruel."

"How do you mean?" inquired the member

"Why, look how the government exacts its rents from the Zimeedars!" expostulated Freepport.

"How do you mean?"

"What do I mean?" echoed Sam. "Why, if a poor wretch does not stump up to the very day, don't they put a ring through his nose, and drag him through the market-places?"

The member of parliament stared with astonishment.

"Not only the Zimeedars, but the Zimeedarances," continued Freepport. "Oh, it's shameful!"

"What are Zeemaranees?" said the member.

"Why, women—handsome women!" responded Sam, indignantly. "Women, sir—*lovely* women! Have you never seen pictures of Hindu women with a ring through the nose?"

"Yes; but I thought that was an ornament," said the member.

"Ornament, eh?" said Sam. "Ah, that's how the East India Company humbug you all! Ornament, eh? Ask Lord Auckland if it's ornament. What about the Begum Bammeroo's case?"

"I never heard of that," said the member.

"No ; of course you didn't," said Sam, filling his glass. "You never hear of anything. 'Keep it dark,' is the East India Company's private motto. 'Senatus Anglicæ virtutes omnibus,' and so forth, is all bosh ! You never heard of the Begum Bammeroo's case—eh !"

"Never !"

"Harroway, you know all the particulars," said Sam. "Just relate them."

"Why, really, Sam," replied Harroway. "I don't think it is worth while. Bygones should be bygones ; and it appears to me there is no prospect of redress."

"I beg your pardon," said the member. "What we want is evidence."

"Oh, if you want evidence," said Sam, "get up a committee in the House of Commons, and call on me. I'll give evidence enough about the state of things in India. Why, sir, you would hardly believe that not one man in five hundred that you meet in that country, has a shoe to his foot, a rag on his back, or a covering for his head, to protect him from the vertical rays of a burning sun. And yet, here are you all, sitting deliberately in cold debate, and imagining that the Indian is nursed in the lap of luxury, and leading a life of affluence and ease !"

"But is there not a free press there," said the member.

"A free press !" quoth Sam. "Bless your innocent heart, they are all in the Company's pay. The government there allows them so much a month to put a good face on everything, and the governor-general is obliged to come down with something handsome besides. Just ask Sir John Hobhouse about the free press of India. What could be more infamous than burking the case of the unfortunate Begum of Bammeroo ?"

"What *was* it ?" asked the member.

"Why, the facts are simply these," said Sam, slowly knocking the ash off his cheroot with his little finger, and taxing his imagination to the highest point. "About two years and a half ago—just as we were proceeding to Afghanistan—"

"The maddest project that ever was undertaken in this world," said the student, who was writing on the question.

"Of course it was," conceded Sam ; "downright insanity ; but of that anon. I'll tell you all about it, for I was there, on Keane's staff, and consequently I know everything relating to it."

"Well, but what about the Begum Bammeroo ?" said the member, impatiently.

"The Begum Bammeroo," resumed Sam, "was the only child of the Dorogah of Juanpore—an island to the westward of Chundfurm, in the Central Provinces."

"What is a dorogah ?" asked the member.

"A dorogah," said Sam, "is a kind of Scotch laird, or a species of Prince of Padua, who has come in for his property."

"I understand."

"Well, sir, during the lifetime of the dorogah, he caused an immense quantity of golahs to be dug."

"What are golahs ?"

"Golahs are pits for holding salt—and he represented to the government that the number of these golahs was only nineteen ; but after his

death, it was discovered that the number was twenty-seven. On this the secretary to the government put himself in communication with the minister of the Begum's court, and without consulting the Begum, who knew nothing about the matter, the minister swore hard and fast that there was not a golah in the whole principality. The Governor-general looked on this as a piece of utter deceit, and he said to himself, 'if, as a mere girl, she can be capable of this, what will she do when she comes to grow older?' and without any further ado, he confiscates all her *jagger*."

"What's a *jagger*?"

"Her lands, her principality. Well, sir, the Begum makes an appeal to the nearest court, through her lawyer, Mr. Daw; and the judge, Mr. Ogelby—in hopes of getting into favour with Auckland, the viceroy—imprisons the Begum for life, and sentences Mr. Daw to five years on the roads; and there's the lawyer now, breaking stones, and the innocent Begum immured in a garret of her ancestral castle. That's what they call the blessings of British rule!"

"How strange this has never reached the ears of the Imperial Parliament!" exclaimed the member.

"Not a bit strange!" said Sam. "It is a part of the system of concealment that is carried on. As I told you before, you know nothing of India. As long as you get a return of the exports and the imports, you are satisfied."

"This state of things shall certainly be brought forward," said the member.

"And call on me to bear you out," said Sam. "I was born a liberal; and, by all that's palatable, I will die a liberal. Harroway, I am quite tired of calling on you to send round the wine. If you don't drink yourself, my dear fellow, be considerate towards other people."

"The mortality amongst the troops is very great, I understand," said the doctor.

"I should think it was," replied Sam. "It is by no means uncommon for a company to be 110 strong one day, and on the next not turn out 25, including the captain and the subs."

"Dear me, you don't say so!"

"I do, though! Cholera, sir, cholera! And yet they go on feeding the men on buffalo beef, which the medical profession there say is the very key-stone of the disease!"

"I can readily understand that," said the doctor.

"Of course you can," said Sam; "and so can any rational man. But what can you do against a despotic and obstinate government? Eh?"

"Very true!" cried every member of the party, George Harroway included.

Freeport went on, telling the most preposterous fabrications, which were listened to with interest and avidity, until half-past twelve o'clock, when the company dispersed—each member being delighted that he had acquired some information respecting our dominions in the East. The member asked Sam, on parting, to allow himself to be proposed as a member of the Travellers' Club, to which Sam assented on the reiterated assurance that it was "very select, and by no means promiscuous."

"Now, George, we will have a quiet glass of brandy and water and a

weed," said Sam, as soon as his guests had departed. "If I have over-rated the amount of ignorance of the better class of Englishmen regarding India, you have only to tell me so; if not, why hold your tongue. What you have heard me say to-night is nothing to be compared to what I have told my brothers and their wives; and I give you my word and honour they are as shrewd a set of people, in all matters connected with this country, as you will meet with in the United Kingdom. Keep to truth, and you are looked upon as prosy. Tell them all sorts of lies, and you are regarded as entertaining and instructive."

"I suspect your friend, the member, will be making a fool of himself, by acting on your information."

"Not a bit of it," responded Sam. "He'll forget all about it before to-morrow evening. He is a rich man, and not an agitator; and India is so far off, nobody in this country cares a brass farden what goes on there, except those pecuniarily interested; and as long as they get their dividends, why, what do they care?"

CHAPTER LII.

THE storm had abated towards the evening of the 2nd of February, and old Newsham became impatient to get back to York. He found a letter from Brade, amongst others, and he opened it hastily, read, and trembled; and, seizing the candle, he walked round and round the room, muttering to himself. Newsham knew that if Brade's bank failed he would be shackled for years; and the remonstrance about the bills in Harroway's favour alarmed him. He placed the light upon the table, seated himself in his large chair, and began to think how he could meet so awful a contingency as the bankruptcy of the house of Brade. A bright thought had just flashed across his brain, and he took a pen in his hand, and looked up at the ceiling. The pen fell from his hand, his eyes were fixed, not staring, for the expression, though intent, was subdued; his lips lay apart, and the whole frame was motionless. He longed to call out for help, but the voice had gone away. He tried to grasp a pencil to write down a few words to his wife, to tell her what he had, where it was, and how to dispose of it; but there he sat, and gazed, unable to move hand, or foot, or eye. Death, holding in one hand the scythe, and the hour-glass in the other, stood out in high relief from the ceiling and beckoned to poor old Newsham to depart with him. He struggled violently, and endeavoured to rise from his chair, but Death seemed to laugh at his efforts, and dismayed him. He coveted the kisses of his children, and a parting word from them, but there was no hope. His head fell upon his shoulder, and he slept away from the world as calmly as a weary child reposes its head upon its mother's breast. He was found next morning by the cook, who raved, and ran to one of the prebends, to make known the event. His family came; but no one, except Anne, dared gaze upon poor old Newsham. In death, the wrinkles had all disappeared, and his forehead was as smooth as her own. There was a placid smile upon the face, which looked more youthful than Anne could ever remember it in life. She seized the hand, which struck a chill unto her heart, and she faintly screamed as the peculiar electric coldness pervaded her every vein. She kissed her dead father tenderly,

and bitter tears, "affection's fondest tribute to the dead," trickled from her own warm cheek upon his. The room was soon crowded, and a middle-aged man, whom Anne had not seen for many a year, led her away from the painful scene, and after speaking some words of kindness and comfort, returned to be the foreman of the jury assembled to inquire into the causes of the old man's death.

CHAPTER LIII.

HARROWAY was not surprised to hear of Newsham's death. The unsettled state of his affairs gave great trouble and anxiety. The demands upon his estate came in thickly enough; but those upon whom he had corresponding, or even greater claims, were not disposed to show themselves. It was a well known fact, that old Newsham might have retired from business with an immense fortune, but no one knew where it was, or how invested. His papers, which were intelligible enough to himself, were mysteries to other people, and the more they were examined the more inexplicable they became.

After many fruitless attempts to ascertain what was the real condition of the estate, Harroway advised the widow to avoid responsibility, and have nothing to say to it; to let it go, pay its own debts, and get paid as it best could. A provision for the widow and her children was guaranteed by Harroway for life, and they left that part of the world where they had experienced so many changes, and retired to a quiet country town in an adjacent county.

Harroway and Anne took a tour upon the Continent, and Sam Freeport betook himself to London, to write a book about the East, with a view (he said) of getting himself into notice, and eventually procuring the government of some colonial possession, where he might leave everything to his ministers, and lead the life of an absolute monarch. The work progressed but slowly. "*Little and good*" was the author's motto, and he therefore filled only half a sheet of paper *per diem*. When the work had extended to what Sam calculated to be three volumes, he took it to a bookseller, and consulted him about the publication. What was his disgust to learn that it would only make a decent sized pamphlet. The mere name of "pamphlet" was enough to shock Freeport. What he wanted was a *work*—a regular work.

A government, that of Madras, fell vacant, and Sam sent in his application, with the following P.S.:—"I am prepared to carry out all sorts of economy; and as a proof of my sincerity in making this statement, I should have no objection to take the office at two-thirds of the present salary." But it was not on the cards (to use Freeport's own phrase), and his hopes were blighted by the claims of others.

Time wore on, and Freeport's means began to dwindle; his brothers warned him that they would make no further advances, and that the best thing he could do would be to join his regiment at once, and endeavour to live on his pay.

"And this is my last five pound note!" soliloquised Sam, as he smilingly took the piece of paper out of his purse, and kissed it for good luck. "Yes, by Jove, *you* are my last five pound note. In you con-

sisteth all my worldly wealth. I wish I knew some rich widow or heiress whom I might endow with you.

"I'll keep you, my darling," continued Sam, folding up the note and putting it into his pocket. "You shall be a sort of 'reserve fund,' a 'bonus,' a 'par privilege,' a 'dividend.' Now I thoroughly understand what they meant by a 'reserve fund.' Yes, you are my 'reserve fund,' and, though you are a little one, and not likely to grow any bigger, why, what does it signify, so long as we have lots of credit? Eh?"

Most men, in Freeport's circumstances, would have glanced at the past, and sorrowed over the sums they had literally thrown away; but it was not Freeport's nature to do anything of the kind. With the past he never troubled himself, and through life he had invariably felt that no man had a right to make himself miserable, or anticipate misfortune.

A card was placed in Sam's hand, bearing the name of Mr. Wrexton, a young gentleman to whom he had on several occasions shown some civility. The young gentleman was shown up, and after a few minutes' conversation he invited Freeport to go down into the country with him. Sam said he was getting very tired of town, and the change would delight him. The young gentleman remarked that his aunt, whom he was about to visit, was a very hospitable old lady, and generally managed to afford her guests a good deal of amusement. Freeport made his arrangements at once; and it was understood that they were to start at nine o'clock the next morning.

Sam beguiled the time with his incessant talk; and from the big way in which he spoke of his affairs in general, and his portly manner conjoined, a stranger might readily have concluded that he was one of the wealthiest and most influential men in all England.

Towards evening they arrived at a lodge, and after wending their way through a long avenue of oaks, they were put down at the door of an old, two storied, brick house, which was nearly covered with ivy. Freeport was introduced, and Mrs. Wrexton expressed her happiness to see him. The house seemed full of guests, married and single, and some seven or eight children, attended by half the number of nursery maids, were running about the hall, previous to going to bed. The dinner hour came, and Freeport joined the rest of the party. There were some six or seven gentlemen, and as many ladies; and with wonderful rapidity Sam speculated upon all of them. At dinner time he found himself beside a lady in deep mourning. Freeport was quite charmed with her conversation, and she fully appreciated his original remarks and good-natured wit. Sam felt perfectly happy, and his feelings were depicted in his face. It was evident to the lady that Sam had not a painful thought or care in the world, and this she attributed to easy circumstances.

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In the course of the evening, "the lady in deep mourning" was asked to sing. She went to the piano, and after playing one or two rather mournful airs, she filled the room with her delicious notes, and elicited much applause.

"Who *is* she?" whispered Freeport, to young Wrexton.

"She is the widow, I believe," whispered Wrexton. "But I never saw her before."

"She is a monstrously fine woman!" observed Sam, in the lowest tone of voice.

"Very much so," rejoined the other.

Sam moved quietly up to the piano, and resumed the conversation which was abruptly broken off when the lady left the dinner table. She looked up in his face, and inquired prettily if he chanted. Of course he did, and without much pressing, "favoured the company" with "the old enchanter's part"—(the lady playing the accompaniment.)

"And not a tear or aching heart
Should in the world be found."

When the ladies retired, young Wrexton proposed whist. To oblige them and make a fourth, Freeport took a hand; but his thoughts were elsewhere, and he kept revoking, trumping his partner's tricks, playing out of his turn, and making other mistakes of a nature very disagreeable to persons who attend to the game.

The following morning various excursions were in progress. Some were for visiting a curious rock, some miles distant; others rode on horseback to the nearest town—and young Wrexton shouldered his gun and roamed round the woods for the purpose of getting a pheasant or two. But Sam declared he had a severe headache, and therefore preferred lounging about the library, and reclining on a couch. The truth was this: the widow, at breakfast, refused to join any party, and Sam stayed at home [he was "at home" everywhere] in the hope of having a quiet chat with her. And he succeeded in his design; for as he reclined on a couch in the library, when the house was deserted by its inmates, the door was opened, and the lady walked up to one of the shelves, and took down a book, without observing Freeport (of course) and without being observed, as she fancied. Sam arose and approached her; but when he spoke, the book fell, she uttered a faint shriek, turned round, and expressed her surprise. No woman but an actress could have done it half so well.

The lady placed her hand upon her heart, as though she wished to prevent its palpitating; and she breathed quickly through a sweetly pretty smile. Sam Freeport was on his knees *instantly*—languishingly praying for pardon, which was granted with a kindliness and grace beyond the power of any pen to describe, and which few minds can imagine.

Freeport admired the widow excessively, and for her personal attractions, notwithstanding she was some years older than himself, would he have married her, had he been a man of fortune; but as he had but a solitary 5*l.* in the world, or as (in his own words) all his wealth was in his waistcoat pocket, he was delighted to reflect that she was well off.

Freeport's attentions became "marked," and it was very clear that the widow was glad to receive them. One moonlight night, the visitors strolled upon the lawn in front of the house. After walking for a short time, Sam led the lady of his love away from the party, and down the avenue, towards the gate. She looked round several times, as though she dreaded to go so far away; but Sam walked on, talking in the most impressive manner, and bidding her not to be alarmed, and assuring her there were no ghosts or goblins.

The widow sighed, and so did Sam.

They stopped suddenly, and looking into the widow's face, which

was perfectly beautiful in the moonlight, Sam asked her to be his. She made no response that could be heard; but she looked assent, and shortly afterwards spoke to him more endearingly than he was usually addressed.

Freeport sealed the contract, and they returned together to the lawn, to be quizzed by young Wrexton, who had himself a great regard for the widow.

The lady under whose protection the widow was living felt annoyed that she should wander forth alone with Captain Freeport, and she showed her feelings so plainly that the widow was very angry, and in an irritated moment, she spoke in terms which amounted to ingratitude. This brought down the censure of another lady, and this worked up the widow into a passion, and she cried, and declared that she was persecuted.

It was agreed between them that Freeport should proceed to London, and that the widow should follow, and on her arrival in town they were to be united.

Sam accordingly took leave of his kind hostess, and returned to the Burlington; and in his absence, young Wrexton made such desperate love to the widow, that his aunt became frightened for his safety, and rejoiced when she left the house, with the avowed intention of becoming Mrs. Freeport.

With what joy did Sam Freeport receive his intended bride! In his ecstasy, he quite forgot he was without the means to defray the expenses of their wedding. But he contrived to borrow 50*l.* from an old friend, for the purpose.

A week passed very merrily away, and madame proposed that they should visit France. Her spouse was "quite agreeable to go anywhere;" but he delicately hinted that his funds were low just then, and that, if she could conveniently come down, it would save him a great deal of trouble.

She stared, on hearing this declaration; and, imagining he was in jest, she smiled.

"Who's your banker?" asked Sam, raising a cup of tea to his lips.

"Alas!" she cried, "I have no bank."

"You don't mean to say you have no money," said Sam, elevating his eyebrows, and laughing.

"Not one sous. But somewhat in debt!"

Sam whistled, and then remarked:

"Well, my angel, I don't know how we are to manage, for I am blowed if I have got any."

"I thought," said Mrs. Freeport, seriously, "that you had a large private fortune."

"I can't help what you *thought*," he replied, "any more than I can help what I thought myself; but what I tell you is a fact."

"I am deceived!" exclaimed Mrs. Freeport.

"So am I, by Jove!" replied Sam; "but what's the odds, as long as we are happy?"

The Harroways purchased an estate in Leicestershire, and thither repaired. George kept his hunters, and enjoyed his meets with the hounds; but his wife could never be prevailed upon to mount a horse. But she was very happy, nevertheless, and a great favourite with every

one in their neighbourhood. And Anne became the mother of a fine little boy, to the vast joy of her husband, who was longing for an heir to succeed to his property.

Sam Freeport and his wife were compelled to return to India, for the captain's leave was almost expired. He borrowed some money of George Harroway to purchase his wife's outfit, and in the letter which contained his demand he inserted the following ominous sentence—"I say, George, dear, tell sister Anne, with my love, that marriage, with me, has been rather a queer business."

THE END.

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